



# OVER THE HILLS AND FAR AWAY

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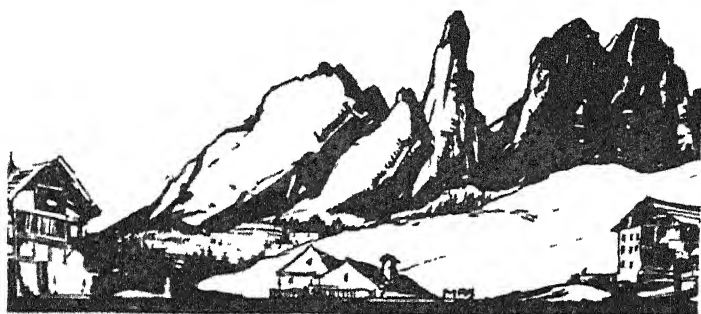
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## I.—OVER THE HILLS

IN these days of lightning travel, when Turkestan is but a solo to be performed any day by any independent young woman, and the Pacific is spanned while you wait, or blink twice, the departure platform of the Gare du Nord, Paris, would seem as unlikely, prosaic and forbidding a spot as could well be imagined for *Invitation au voyage* to two young people just falling desperately, irrevocably in love. In fact, it was far from being chosen, that rendezvous—it was snatched; Himself was remaining in Paris. I was travelling on under chaperonage. So, behold us pacing up and down the busy, dingy, luggage-infested platform, seeing visions and dreaming dreams, during which the fateful exhortation was made by me (and very vilely worded, too, but honesty compels me to quote the words with exactness): "Why don't you *write*? You are just the person!" which gave the first impetus towards a literary calling to John Galsworthy.

Now, first among the advantages or drawbacks, or both, of a writer's life, is the fact that he need never,

unless so minded, be separated from his profession. A stiff-backed block of sheets of paper, a pen, a travelling inkstand (for the writer under observation did not thrive on fountain pens; there was something of ritual in the thoughtful, leisurely dipping of pen into ink, something of rhythm, of punctuation, unconscious as breathing, measured, necessary) and all the "plant" was complete. That his profession can hardly help going with him wherever he goes is no doubt a danger to a writer; the chances of complete rest are rendered remote. But with Himself that danger can scarcely be said to have existed; his work was also his pleasure and his hobby; he would have been uneasy without it at hand. If for any reason he felt disinclined towards it, yet it was right and comfortable that the "plant" should await his first impulse towards resumption of work, and that without loss of a minute—for no one ever economised time more successfully; there never was any sense of hustle or strain, and there always seemed time even for the unexpected to be dealt with without hustle and without strain.

For many years we still looked on the grimy Gate du Nord (we being outward bound) as the gateway of better things to come: the sun-warmed plains of Central France, the sun-baked plains of Provence; towards the Jura or Haute Savoie, the glimpses of soul stirring snowy heights in Switzerland; further east, the fantastic rocky pinnacles and rosy domes of South Tirol (as it was then), from which we never again shook ourselves free, nor wished to; the direct run to

Marseilles, there to take ship for some more distant land; the direct run down the western side of France to our very familiar haunts in the Basque country; all the many uncounted little joys and surprises of travel—all safely and automatically stored in the mind, ready to flash out again as memories and to be enjoyed afresh as travel-pictures should be—fragrant and alluring, shorn of all the disgruntlements of the moment of happening.

Just now several little railway pictures float into my mind, more comic, indeed, than fragrant and alluring. One is of Amiens station, where our opulent Vienna-bound Orient Express was resting for a very few minutes, and Himself, attracted by a perambulating bookstall, descended to choose some books. He was still immersed in this great business when our haughty train, without whistle or warning, as is the custom of these high-grade vehicles, began to slide forth from the platform. Fortunately Himself was a most excellent runner; he sprinted after the train containing an agitated wife, and swung himself up on to the rear steps of a Pullman.

The next little railway station picture garnered in memory, has a more dramatic appeal. Returning from some Continental jaunt, we found ourselves at Charing Cross station. It was in the long-ago days of four-wheelers. After the Customs and the loading up on the cab of our luggage, we jogged soberly along to the station front, where, before emerging into the courtyard, there is a narrow strait, permitting the egress of



only one vehicle at a time. As we reached this, I became conscious of a most furious galloping behind us, and rapidly coming nearer. For one moment I could think of nothing but fire engines (it was also the day of the horse-drawn fire engine); then in a flash I remembered seeing a very fine pair of bay horses attached to a private omnibus for luggage, which had its station next behind us at the platform. Instantly I found myself turning the cab door handle, stepping out and closing the door after me, quite sure, for some obscure reason, that Himself was doing the same on his side of the vehicle. However, it was not so. Next moment there came a most formidable crash; the high-spirited bays, having bolted while their men were loading trunks on the busroof, had caught us up, neatly but not quite centrally impaled us on their pole, and were propelling the cab very briskly into the cobblestoned courtyard of the station. Down went our poor horse, our driver thrown heavily on to the stones, luggage strewn wildly here and there, and the cab turned on its side. And lo! quite miraculously, a smiling face appeared through the cab window, now facing heavenward, and a youthful Mr. Pickwick, standing in a sort of rostrum, emerged, stepped daintily out of the wreckage, spectacled, unperturbed, and uninjured. Not so the cabby, who, being badly bruised and shaken and elderly, was in hospital for some weeks, nor the poor horse, whose knees were broken. *Why* are horses so easily upset? There must be something wrong with their build or balance!

Two or three more very small railway station episodes float into mind; they are all of a similar character and show another side of railway travel. At Cologne Central, just as we were about to enter our train we were interviewed by a very imposing official, who with a perfect show of authority demanded our tickets and went off with them. We took our seats and watched rather anxiously for his return, from the open carriage window. Just as the train was starting he reappeared, waving our tickets, and saying: "Five marks!" As the train was beginning to gather speed there seemed only one possible answer. Himself produced the desired coin, the tickets were handed up to us. But it was a real satisfaction to us to watch the enormous, lordly fraudulent official obliged to run very smartly after his prey and his coin, towards the end of the transaction.

Another similar defeat of the helpless traveller was still more trivial. At Salzo Maggiore station I stood at a little distance on the platform watching a young quasi-porter removing the neat leather label holders on my hand-luggage. When he had unbuckled the last I walked up to him and expostulated. But he, with hands in pockets which no doubt contained the booty, rolled his cigarette from one corner of his mouth to the other, smiled unpleasantly and strolled away. So that was that. Quite too trivial to make a fuss about, with our train just appearing!

Yet one more railway episode where the traveller was more or less defeated. It was at Oudjda, the

frontier between Algeria and Morocco. The Customs examination took place in a forbidding kind of cattle pen, and several huts. The officials were wildly excited at the advent of my typewriter. We were condemned to fill in at least five documents, and to deposit a sum, 600 francs I think, reclaimable on leaving the country. However, on leaving Morocco it was by car, and we very cheerfully avoided Oudjda, documents and deposit, feeling it to be cheap at the price.

\* \* \* \* \*

Of all the pleasures and treasures in waiting for us on the far side of the Gare du Nord, mountains easily took first place in our hearts—not perilous snow and ice; snow we felt, except as a lovely decoration against the sky, was an unfair reminder of our northerly home. Scrambles among limestone crags and ledges, always without guide (for we found that frequently the over-cautious Baedeker's advice need not be followed), and very seldom with any peril attached, we became passionately attached to the Dolomites and all their ways. Indeed, at one time we seemed in a fair way to emulate a fellow train-traveller on his way to the Dolomites for the twenty-first time. When we met him he was taking out his bride for her first and his twenty-second visit. We could not help wondering what would become of them if the young woman failed to like Dolomites. Perish the thought! She *must* fall into line with the rest of the Dolomite "fans," ecstatically happy and exhilarated among those mighty rock pinnacles, towering rosy domes, wall-like precipices





MONTE PELMO: VERY LEONINE IN CERTAIN LIGHTS

where no snow may lodge; lion-like Pelmo couchant against a sunset sky; Becco di Mezzodi, pointing heavenward, slim and straight; Civetta, most feminine and symmetrical of mountains; Tofana's vast overwhelming bulk; Cristallo's split double summits with glacier pouring down between them; Piz Poppena, rosy and dome-shaped; Sorapis, a throne for the whole hierarchy of gods; Antelao, soaring, untamed, noble, with snow sprinkling his forehead here and there; Cadinen, with splintered precipitous needles; the Drei Zinnen, so strangely set on their high-lying table, which is, no doubt, where Zinnen (forks) should be; the Sella group; the Rosengarten, so beautiful, and the Latemar, almost more beautiful—of what use to try and describe them? Those who know them will thrill at the mere names, at the incredible sweetness and wildness and secret lure of it all, the fragrance of pine woods and wild thyme and wild bees and cyclamen and mountain pinks fringed and pale and exquisitely scented; from the first little soldanella's silvery mauve bell piercing through the snow to the last autumn crocus (Madonna's fingers), all is glamour and loveliness. The best of all times of year for enjoying the flowers is, of course, just before the hay harvest; after that, though the true Alpines are unaffected, all the meadow flowers, and they are myriad, fall to the scythe and are sadly missed.

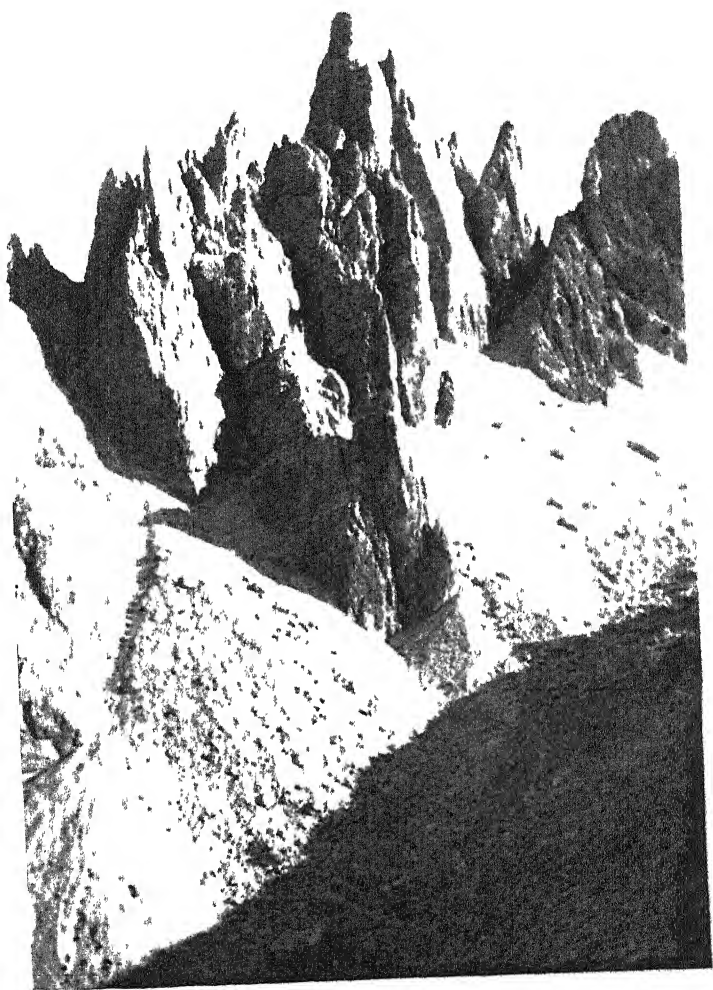
In those far-away days we were good walkers; our usual scheme was to fix a base at some lovely spot—Cortina, say—or Landro—and make long whole-day rounds, starting before sunrise and finishing at dark.

Sharply cold it was at the start, but unless we were half-frozen for the first quarter of an hour we knew the weather was not right or that we had come out over-clothed. Having taken our coffee and roll in the dim dawn and got going, we were ready by about seven o'clock for a second light breakfast; and so it was throughout the day—light meals only, at two or three hour intervals. We found this plan far more repaying and less fatiguing than the heavy orthodox midday meal and the heavy rest after it. A very valuable pick-me-up, by the way, is clear tea with a spoonful of red wine in it; the restorative effect is very remarkable; the quality of the wine would seem to be quite immaterial, and the flavour of the tea is very little altered. The worst possible drink for walking on we found to be beer, or, to be exact, I did. Once, but never again, I drank a glass of cool, delicious beer; it disabled me completely for an hour or more, stealing into the muscles of my calves in a most distressful way. It did not go to my head, as the ribald may imagine; all the same, there was nothing to be done but to lie on my back in a flowery meadow and wait for strength to come again, and the aching to depart from those calves. A very chastening experience.

Many of our happiest tramping days were from the village of Landro, Val d'Ampezzo, as base. In those pre-war days it was a pleasant small village on the high road leading from the Pusterthal, via Cortina, to Italy; and it was near the foot of Monte Pian. The hotel was decidedly large and flourishing, though simple, the end







CRODA DA IAGO: NOI AS DIFFICILI AS IT LOOKS

of the house abutting on the main road, the long frontage at right angles, covering a big stretch of meadows and facing Monte Cristallo. When we last passed that way we found just a jumble of stones, brick, rubble, beams; no trace at all of our pleasant hotel, nor any single building left standing. The battle which raged on and about Monte Pian for two or three days during the Great War had entirely destroyed the village, together with a small Austrian fort about half a mile distant. I don't know why this village should have been abandoned; other villages, like Livinalongo, were also utterly destroyed, but have been rebuilt. It produces a very strange impression, seeing not one single sign of all that one knew so well; one can't quite believe in either the past or the present, as one looks back at both, here and now.

Many times did we tramp up the Schwartz Rienz-thal, till we reached the Drei Zinnen hut, pausing there for one of those simple but good meals for which it was famed. Immediately after I remember cruising down rather too rapidly for my liking, in a chute of limestone flakes, lightly fallen débris from the Kleine Zinne, of a kind well-known to the Dolomite climber. I was not submerged, as sometimes happens; the débris is then called "egg-shell," I believe, by whoever survives. The authentic "egg-shell" is only negotiable when frost has made a good crust on it; but one must occasionally make one's little experiments, alarms and excursions in fact, just to see. Once or twice we tramped on to the Zigmondy hut, placed at the foot of the towering

Zwölferkofel, a peak which reminds one somewhat of the Matterhorn. Then on and down the Fischleimboden, where on our last visit we came on the remains of a fine new hotel, burnt or bombed to destruction during the War; down the length of the Sexenthal, out into the broad sunny Pusterthal as far as Toblach, passing on our way a lovely grassy glade wherein the Diave takes its rise, a bubbling spring. I cast a young green leaf on the rivulet, wishing it well on its long, long journey to the Black Sea. And so, back up the Ampezzothal, the five miles to Landro and hot baths and supper.

Yes, there were many pleasant ways around Landro; it is hateful to think that it no longer exists--no homely hotel, with heavy wooden balconies facing Monte Cristallo across the hay meadows, balconies where we used to take our coffee, rolls and honey, sitting out in the fresh crisp morning sunlight on rest days; for rest days place themselves very properly among the strenuous days of tramping, rest days, and a little writing, for a change. As for me, I would then wander off to the hay meadows to help the peasant folk turn their hay, for in the mountains one must seize all chances to forward such work, the sudden and violent changes of weather being just the one certainty. Once they tried to teach me to scythe; it was sheer luck that I came through without cutting off my feet. Idly I wonder as I turn the hay why Z is such a popular letter hereabouts: Ampezzo, Felizon, Zumeles, Zigmondy, Travernanzes, Falzarego, Canazei, Predazzo, Fonzago,

Auronzo, Andraz. I think the Zigmondy hut is named after a famous climber of that name, but I believe it is also a place name; all the others are Z words truly, and I wonder why so many, and so local. They are all within 20 miles or so, at a rough guess.

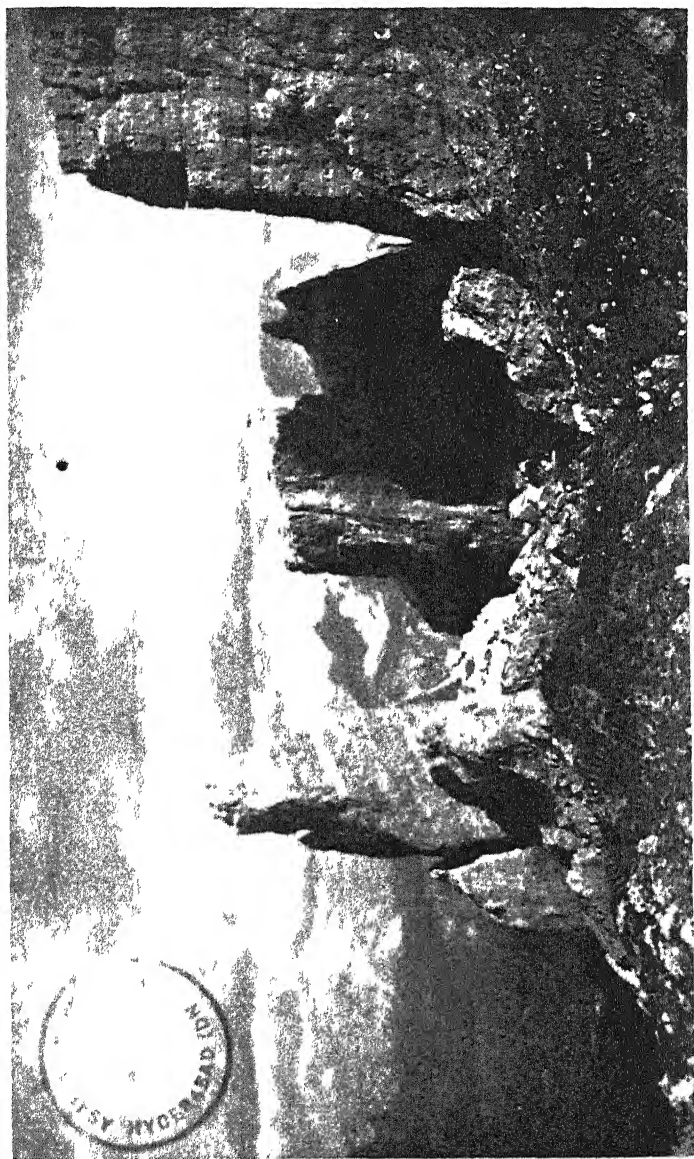
Another pleasant tramp from our vanished Landro took us up to Plätzwiese, at the foot of the Dürrenstein. The hotel there was well placed as a rest house between Landro and the top of the mountain. Seen from Plätzwiese the Dürrenstein reveals itself as a long tame grey-backed slope with a path zigzagging up it. More spectacular was its appearance as we came up from the Pragser Wildsee valley whence we got the impression of an utterly unclimbable, wickedly overhanging peak. So fraudulent was this appearance and so tame the ascent from Plätzwiese in reality that we enlivened ourselves by trotting gaily up, cutting off long hairpin turns of the path, and thereby earning the wrath of some German hikers, who took things as seriously as possible, and did not fail to shout at us raucously: "Eilen ist Unsinn!" (To hurry is madness!) The extreme summit of the fraudulent little mountain we found to be very weather-worn and crumbly; to help the climber iron stanchions had been driven upright into the rock, and a stout iron chain ran horizontally between, alongside the uncertain path. Seeing the chain I laid hold, and was duly horrified to find one stanchion loose at its base and the chain and stanchion swinging slackly towards me. I had, however, put no weight on my grip, so that all was well, for I

was never at all giddy on heights or edges; if Himself had laid hold it might not have ended so well, for he was subject to giddiness on heights and edges. On one occasion we stayed at the Plätzwiese hotel for a week; its height, 6,900 feet, was just a little more than suited us; we felt slightly disinclined for exertion, slightly fluttery and disembodied, not as one should feel in good mountain air. Yet, I suppose that at the Riffelalp above Zermatt we were at a greater elevation, and felt no inconvenience: I don't know what rules these oddities of behaviour among the mountains. I am perhaps specially sensitive to elevation; bring me down too quickly, as rack and pinion railways do, from a considerable elevation and I shall probably indulge in an hour or two of passionate weeping, or at the least a violent headache and—sickness. All very stupid and unseemly, but I need hardly say, entirely beyond my control. Perhaps these are the base mechanical variants of mountain sickness; I have never been high enough to be initiated into the real thing.

Up the main road from Landro, past Schluderbach and Ospitale, there comes a very sharp turn southward in the route, and the true Ampezzo-thal containing Cortina is revealed. In the old horse-carriage days one would abandon the vehicle at the head of the Felizon gorge, plunge down it on foot, and rejoin the carriage which had made a wide curve, passing the foot of the gorge in due time. From about there a broad valley opens out, sweet and wild, and much more smiling than that part which we have just quitted. And now

Cortina comes into view with its surprisingly elegant campanile gracing the simple village, yet not looking out of character; the situation is so lovely and important that it calls for a focussing point, and has it; one might indeed imagine Giotto's campanile from Florence looking at home there, and by no means beyond reason grand, so huge, so overpoweringly lovely are the heights around. In pre-war days Cortina was just a climber's village, with the two great families, Ghedina and Menardi, supplying most of the guides, the two principal hotels, and most of the population. The chief hotel, L'Aquila Nera, very centrally placed, was the headquarters of the Ghedina family; the clan Menardi held the more domestic and family resort, the Faloria, among the woods on the hillside well outside the village. Nowadays the many big hotels give a sophisticated look to the place; one fears that a casino, cinema and theatre may be added by Italians who demand to be amused in their own way. When the summer heat attacks the cities of Italy, Cortina is found to be comfortably placed for the cooling migration; early July sees the great influx, and town-bred ways and voices and dresses abound; peace and simplicity are submerged. But the eternal hills are unchanged; the walks and climbs nearly so. It was from Cortina that we made our very best day's round of 31 miles, and that without undue tiredness, the mountain air being what it is. Sad that in the heavier air of England 15 miles would have certainly seemed more of an undertaking; I speak as one having done both. Among those hills

there was a kind of intoxication that led us always far from roads and paths, always out to the unknown scrambling, sliding, often wondering how on earth we would get further or back, seldom getting lost, always happy, and always without guide, not that we had any dislike to the race of guides, very far from it, but because the whole intoxicating game would have vanished, or have worked out very differently. Even for quite little walks, alluring signboards nailed to trees invited one to come to "The Gateway of the woodland god," to the "Five Towers," "To the pastures of Faloria," to the "Deserted Mountain": one felt one simply had to go and see. Up at the sylvan god's gateway I discovered an unknown alpine flower, that it should be unknown to me was not so very remarkable, but down at the hotel it created a flutter among the flower cognoscenti, and I rendered myself unpopular by refusing to disclose where it grew. It had caught my eye as I approached a big overhanging rock, which jutted out in platform fashion above the valley far, far below. Only by lying on my front, and reaching down and inwards was I able to get hold of a small bit. It was of an ugly pink, but I do not remember its appearance otherwise; I have never met it again. How one remembers the first finding of any Alpine, whether rare or common, matters but little. Picking my first "Dusty Miller" auricula, on the Cimon della Pala, was also an affair of lying on my front, squirming forward and reaching blindly down for the lovely Chinese yellow flower, with powdery green-grey stalk, and the sight of



TORRI INGLES DOLOMITI (RAGS)





the first Alpine columbine, such a purple and such a big bold flower for the dwarf dried-up looking little plant it is an event; the first soldanella, actually piercing through snow, and looking, with its mauve silver-spangled and fringed little bell, like the cap of some fairy; the first pulsatilla, the first sulphur anemone, the first glacier ranunculus (and the last, so far as I am concerned, for I found it only on a black-iced little peak near the very top of the Stelvio pass, but there it was in its thousands); even the Alpine clematis with its far flung branches carrying the mauve trio of dainty long pointed petals grouped about a petticoat of ivory; the universal gentians, and saxifrages, and the black vanilla orchid which one tracks by its delicious scent rather than by sight (for its blackness renders it rather invisible). I remember the first sight of all these, as well as, of course, the first meeting with the edelweiss. But that is a sad story. Below Zermatt, in a fat lush meadow, beside a tiny stream, cheek by jowl with all the other meadow flowers, there sat my first edelweiss. It was a great blow; being a romantic young person, I felt that the misguided creature had slain all my lofty dreams. I have never quite recovered from that shock, though I have since found edelweiss in many entirely orthodox surroundings. Reginald Farrer calls it the "flannel flower" which is perhaps a little unkind; but of real beauty it has very little, compared with, say, a gentian. It was on one of these shorter walks, which by way of muscle-training always preceded the long days of tramping, that we raced home in 55

minutes a distance usually allotted 1½ hours. Our winged feet fled before the pursuit of an horrific thunderstorm; we certainly got very wet, but we managed to avoid the more central activities of that very considerable commotion.

A stroll across short turf towards the squat, rocky, tawny-rose Pomagognon, but always bearing upward, brought us one day to a deep cleft in the rock wall facing us, it was labelled: Zumeles. Being a very vaguely indicated but quite steep path, we were perforce soon near to the top, but just the last 100 yards or so were practically vertical and one took what foothold presented itself. On the descent I found it more convenient to take that bit sitting down where possible. At the top we arrived on a more or less level plateau, and there were edelweiss in great profusion: the flowers were small, but innumerable. Some years later, after the war, we revisited this plateau and found it terribly changed. The war had ploughed deep furrows of damage; the path up the cleft was mostly destroyed, up on the plateau one found brushwood shelters, lookouts and bits of rusty chain, a gun emplacement, débris of all sorts, soup plate helmets—one alas! with a bullet hole through it, trophy indeed for the collector of war souvenirs! For me it was too heart-breaking a reminder of those dreadful years; I could only bury it reverently up there, grieving as if the poor head were still inside it. In Cortina the disused "soup plate" was a great deal used as container for carnation plants; one would see a row of them on a windowsill or

along a balcony top, all gaily blooming, just as one might and did often see a pair of steel shells planted as decoration one each side of a chalet door—a war decoration indeed!

We were spectators of an odd ceremonial arranged by Italian authorities on a certain post-war Sunday, in Cortina. A manifesto posted in every conspicuous spot in the village, made it evident that Italy would collect all the bones of her dear sons fallen in battle all around this countryside, bring them to one of the two principal churches in Cortina, take part in the blessing of them by the Church, carry them in procession through the village and entrain them for Italy. And all inhabitants were invited to take part in this touching ceremony; but it will be noted that for Italy's purposes, *all* the bones were Italian! Although this had been Austrian territory up to the final defeat of the Central Powers, no mention of Austria and *her* beloved sons, equally fallen in defence of their own soil, equally strewn about the countryside, was made. What an amazing example of obtuseness in a nation by no means obtuse; and what a chance missed of a generous gesture to a defeated foe. If there was anything to be said in favour of this gruesome ceremonial, why not have assembled the bones, as Italian and Austrian, which they most undoubtedly were, and (both sides being Roman Catholic to a man, at least nominally) having had them blessed by Holy Church, halved the assortment? The stern Tirolese responded to this peculiar invitation to honour Italy's bones, by staving quietly in their homes with doors

shut and no signs of life; the bones were blessed, processed through the village, and finally entrained for "home." One wonders if, once there, they were distributed in packets—"real Italian bones, no other"—or were interred en masse. That sunny, radiant Sunday was a thoroughly wretched day, even for us, the atmosphere of protest and unhappiness made itself felt so unmistakably. This part of the Austro-Italian front in the Great War must have been a ferociously busy one; it was of course taken and retaken and taken again. For years afterwards all summer long lorries were out collecting the aftermath, chiefly rusty barbed wire; one would meet the huge vehicles day after day coming in towards sunset piled high with the rusty coils. And still there was always enough left on the hillsides to entangle the unwary foot passenger. But the new-gashed and streaked hills with their raw, roughly cut roads, the concrete gun emplacements so surprisingly lighted on in the quiet woods, the high perched look-out and snipers' posts, the trenched points of vantage, the vast barracks hastily built and falling into decay, the ruined and burned villages; all the ruthless, ugly, foul remains of war—nothing of all this could make really serious or permanent inroads on the unconquerable loveliness of that valley; it was but little more than a fly might look on the flank of a tranquil elephant! Dolomites are strangely animistic in spirit—Pelmo a lion couchant along the sky; those wonderful rock profiles of gods and goddesses in the Val Bona; the patient elephant for ever pacing across the narrow

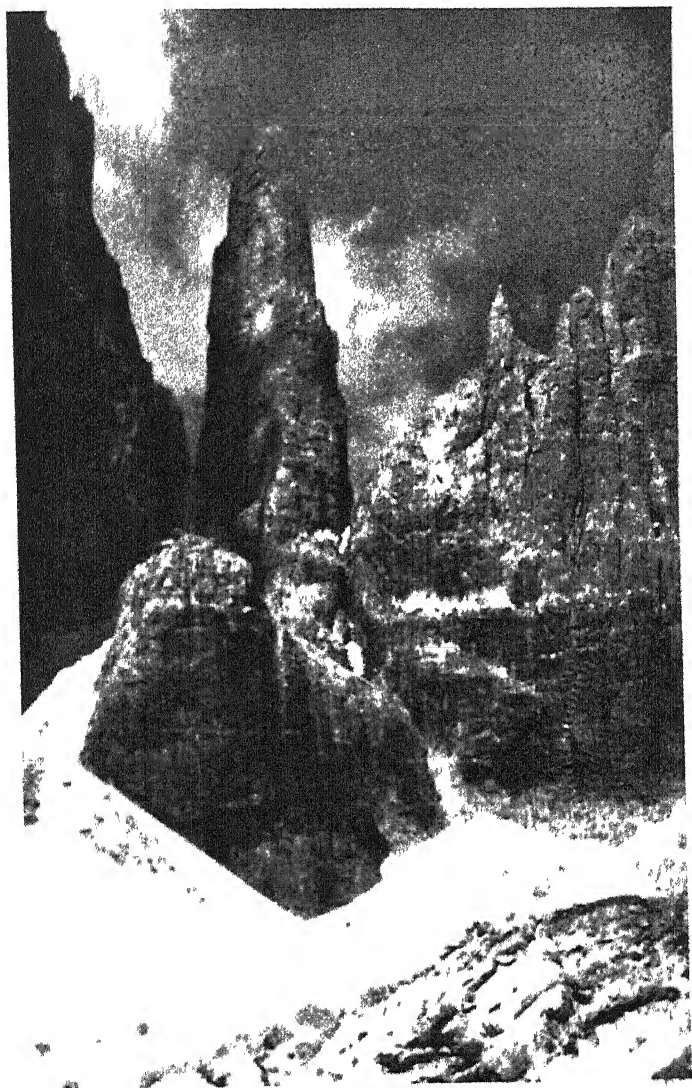
Schwartz Rienz-thal, carrying, as howdah on his back, the Drei Zinnen; the huge amphitheatre of Sorapis inviting the whole hierarchy of giant deities to file in and take their places; these and other lurking elusive portents haunt the mind; all is strangely living, breathing, watching, somewhat menacing.

A good and not too strenuous walk was that one up to Tre Croci, and on along a hillside track in the direction of Sorapis, till, skirting round a most tremendous buttress, we turned in towards that mountain. At the foot of this most mighty amphitheatre for the gods lay a little lake, with blocks of ice upon it in midsummer; all about it were masses of sulphur coloured anemones and blazing burning blue gentians. At the nearby hut we tasted some of the best cake and the worst wine that ever came our way. And we were sorely tempted to return to Cortina by another route, being temperamentally averse to "there and back again"! However, the weather becoming uncertain and the way being entirely unknown, we abandoned it, in a fit of discretion which is not always the better part of valour, I believe.

Another fine day's outing provided a round of 50 miles, some of which were covered by driving, but for the better part by walking. The long stretch of high road from Cortina to Pieve di Cadore was speedily traversed by car, our proud spirits disclaimed that kind of walking; another section from Auronzo to the foot of the climb up to the Tre Croci level was undertaken in a little victoria; but there was plenty of good tramp-

ing left for us to do' Walking up through the Val Bona I had an odd experience Finding myself gradually encircled by a big flock of mountain goats I was so affected by their glassy yellow eyes, soft pushing noses, movement, clamour and overpowering smell that I had the sensation of floating off into goatland even into goathood I was glad to come to, rather giddy and breathless, by the time the last of the friendly creatures had been driven on by their goatherd Goats are always almost too friendly, in the mountains, we have often had the greatest difficulty in ridding ourselves of the company of some affectionate kid who showed all the signs of preferring us to its mother and family We climbed up to Tre Croci after sunset, took one more small meal there, and set out on our homeward way to Cortina in the soft summer darkness arriving at 9.30 It was a long day, but not tiring

Another lengthy loop that we resolved to make was to start from Cortina, encircle the Drei Zinnen, descend to Landro, take a carriage to the top of the Felizon gorge, walk down it and so home again to Cortina After our coffee and roll before sunrise we set out for Tre Croci and Misurina, where at about 7.30 we found ourselves ready for the second light breakfast Then along the level shore of the gentle Misurina lake, up and up to the rocky base or plateau from which the Drei Zinnen rise There in a sheltered and sun-warmed hollow we took our ease Above all signs of life, above vegetation, in the austere stillness, we lost ourselves in contemplation, becoming very small yet



CAMIANI PASSO A DOLOMITI DI FINE





near to a Great Understanding; tiny in the Great Scheme, yet indispensable. Influences hovered, communion, discipline—chastening to the soul of the wanderer, very precious to remember, never to be quite obliterated even when the cosiness and commonness of life envelop one afresh in the everyday. . . . Up and on again, always keeping the three prongs to our right, till we found ourselves at the forward end of the Vordere Zinne. Here there was a scree slope, flakes of débris from the mountain, and we looked at it wondering if by descending we might strike our downward path to Landro. However, the more we looked the less we were charmed; it was a chute leading so straitly and disconcertingly down, down into the jaws of a straddling dark archway or cavern. Suppose we were engulfed, or found ourselves quite astray, it looked impossible to get back to where we stood. After reflection we decided against that short cut with the black yawning nether end, and went on with our encirclement of the Zinnen. After some time we saw with great pleasure a lonely figure coming towards us; a brown skinned, brown-bearded, brown-eyed shepherd, clothed in brown wool. He told us that about another hour of walking would bring us within sight of our downward path to Landro, and that there was no other possible route. We then confided to him our temptation to try that scree slope as a short cut, at which he raised his hand in a solemn gesture that showed us we had been well-inspired to resist it. The rest of the walk was according to plan; but two moments in one day so

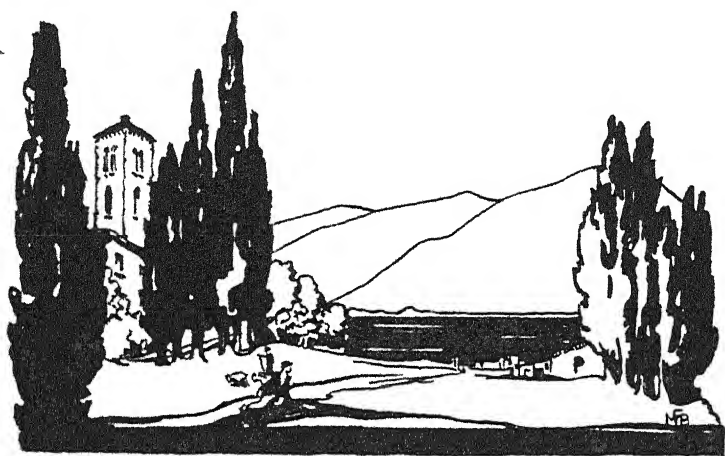
near to the Infinite made a rare experience. Another great memory is that when we watched a climber on the Kleine Zinne, in those times considered risky. Later in the day we could not help quietly observing him on his return from the ascent; he was then seated outside the Drei Zinnen hut, with a carafe of red wine before him, still in a kind of trance of happy triumph and fatigue, a little smile coming and going on his plain and almost elderly face, otherwise very still as he lived again the incidents of the climb. It was good to see such utterly blameless happiness; he was quite unconscious of our presence. In very different mood was our meeting with a young Viennese girl-friend on her return from climbing the Croda di Lago. At the hut by the lake we greeted her, and she, holding out an incredibly small, neat, heavily-nailed boot towards us, said: "It was splendid, but I will have to talk to my bootmaker. He has made my boots so *big* that I was quite hampered by them!"

In this climber's Paradise there are certain rocks for which rope-soled canvas shoes are used; many a pair of heavily-nailed mountain boots have we come across, waiting for their owner's return from a ticklish bit of rock-climbing above, on which their clumsy insensitivity would have been a danger. Pathetic they looked, unlaced, huge, inelegant, humbly waiting, trusty and dog-like, for their masters. The Cinque Torre, five very strangely shaped rocks of no great height, call for rope soles; there is some chimney work to be done there. The Nuvolau, a more distant buttress but in

the same direction, is negotiable by a simple rough path; the hut at the top, like all the other Alpine Club huts in this part of the world, has been used and more or less destroyed, in the War. Tre Croci was another spot where one sometimes met the climber home from the hill. We were frequently to be found there, unobtrusively consuming one of the many small meals that adorned our walking day—meals that could not be dignified by the name of lunch or dinner. One day we were much surprised to see a landau, with large English-looking horses, draw up in front of the inn. Seated in it were an unmistakable couple of English elderlies. They were evidently well known to mine host, who hurried out to wish them good day, not with any ulterior motive, I am sure, but as an obvious gesture from any well-mannered Tiroler. The ancient islander made no response to his greeting, being in too great a hurry to impart his information. Pettishly waving mine host away, as it were a persistent fly, he said in the very plainest English: "No, no, we're not stopping for lunch today," and ordered his coachman to drive on. The innkeeper retired indoors, looking crestfallen, and I have seldom felt more uncomfortable, though it was no business of mine. We most carefully forbore to ask who his gentlefolk English friends were!

The hotel at Misurina was a sophisticated affair compared with the Tre Croci inn. There too we were often to be found, taking one of the many light meals which enabled us to enjoy the whole of the day without wasting hours at a time. From here the Drei Zinnen

take on an unfamiliar outline, rendered since the War yet more unfamiliar, for the top of the Kleine Zinne was blown off, whether intentionally or not I do not know. The Col di Lana, over the Falzarego pass, was mined by Italian troops, and blown up with intention. Unfortunately the débris fell in an unexpected direction, and five hundred Italian soldiers were killed. Yes, the War was very fierce around this lovely haunt of ours, though but little impression can be made on its deep, everlasting beauty—mere scratches, bleeding today, healed tomorrow!



## II.—MORE HILLS

A GLORIOUS day's motoring took us, on more than one occasion, from Cortina to Merano; and perhaps it is even better taken in the contrary direction, for then one leaves the gorge-like Eggenthal early, which is an advantage, and comes on the Rosengarten and Latemar before the really commonplace hours of the day—from two to four—have reduced their beauty a little. Then on we go along the Fassathal, not forgetting to cast a glance up a side valley at the deeply mysterious Vajolet Thürme spearing into the sky; on to Canazei for lunch. Then comes the Pordoi pass, which I remember first traversing before the road was finished; I think I may say that Himself and I were the first travellers to use it; one of the road-makers gave me a bunch of noble orange lilies to commemorate the fact. There was a stretch of about 100 yards quite impossible for wheels, so under construction was it. A carthorse was borrowed, the carriage taken up to a steeply

sloping meadow alongside the road, and with the help of some of the road-makers who held and guided the lower side of the tilted vehicle we came through somehow. But it was a thrilling moment, for near the top of Pordoi a lively, thoroughly mountain thunderstorm had burst upon us, and it lasted well through the 100 yards of steep meadow work.

On another occasion and in another place we were first on the road, but only the first of the season. I think it was on the Sella joch and as we motored towards a certain hut—not an Alpine Club hut, but one for road repairs—we realised that a wayward fall of stones, or snow, or water had removed the road in a disconcerting manner. Our young driver got out, tested the edges of the narrow ravine, backed a little, and with our approval shot the gap quite easily; we saw a very surprised little bunch of road menders' faces, looking out at us from the hut. It was the usual kind of pass road, mountain wall up on the left, precipice down on the right; no choice at all, and very little chance of being able to turn round for a long way back; nothing but hairpin turns, quite troublesome enough to negotiate forward-moving.

Along to Arabba, and by the long Livinalongo to the village of that name, completely unrecognisable since its entire rebuilding after the War. Then comes the last of the three passes, Falzarego, made, that is excavated, from a mountain of rock; first passing the romantic little castle of Andraz so neatly fitted on to its rock rising in the middle of the deep valley; up and up

by narrow ways on the side of a mountain, through a rock tunnel, out into a sweeter air, pine-scented, grass-scented; past the Belvedere, and there lies the Ampezzo valley with Cortina in its midst. Taken in the opposite direction there is also a like moment of expansion towards the end of the journey; one dashes out of the Gorge of the Eggenthal into the large sunny basin where three rivers meet—the Adige, the Eisak, and the Talfer. There sits Bolzano in all its beauty and friendliness, a land overflowing with wine and fruits. The modern buildings are now so many and important that it is becoming difficult to find the old Bozen I knew as a girl of seventeen; but I love it still and shall always find it interesting and welcoming. I connect with it the memory, too, of such good dinners—blaue Forellen, Rehbraten with Preiselbeeren and Salad, Bozener Compote—all washed down with Vöslauer Goldeck, a generous red wine that, if it still exists in name, does not in nature, or rather, did not when I last met it. The deep golden wine called Terlaner keeps its character unchanged; in going up the valley from Bolzano to Merano we pass the village where it is made—also the beer-making village of Vilpian, but the beer I have not tried—never again in a mountain country! And so, through the suburb of Untermals to Merano, dearly loved by me for quite fifty years. No place ever blended so happily the characters of ancient capital city, modern tourist resort, health cure, large village, in so perfectly unselfconscious a way; the whole place is full of song and story, of history and legend.

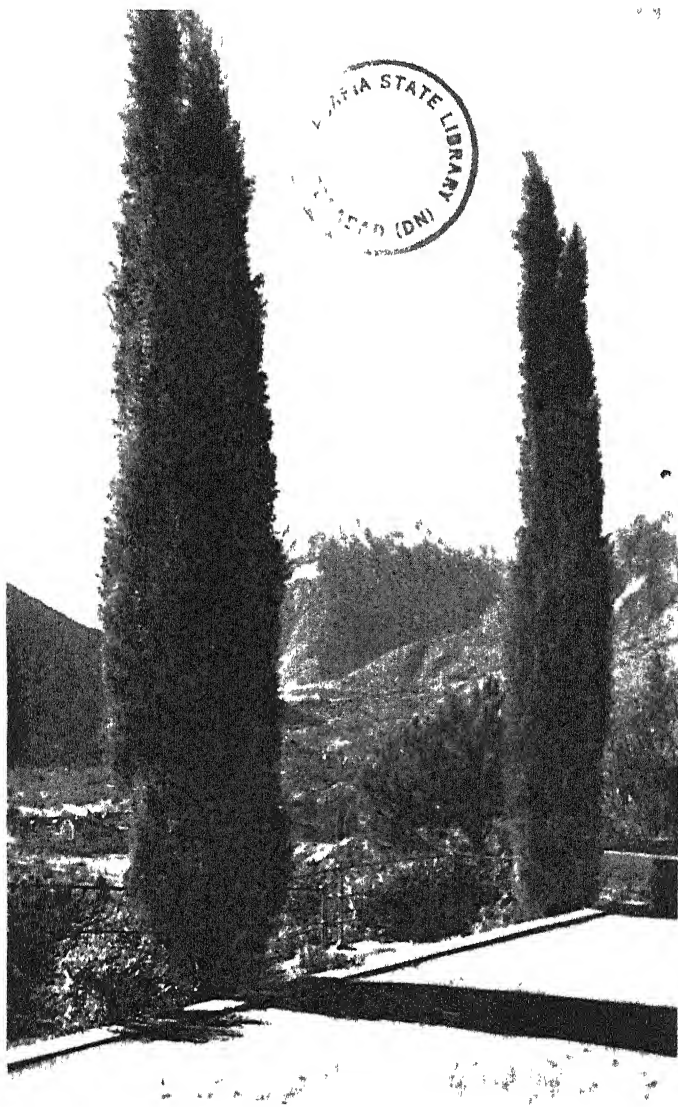


Here, in the well-preserved little Schloss in the middle of the town, Walther von der Vogelweide is said to have been imprisoned. I wonder what for? Surely not for writing such loveliness (even in translation) as :

“Upon us all hath Winter cast its woe;  
Forests and fields are dark, their verdure gone.  
The sweet song cometh from the woods no more.  
Once on the meadows maidens tossed the ball,  
And in the forest glade the small birds sang.  
Oh! could I sleep the livelong Winter through!  
Waking I mourn because he reigns so long.  
But May will drive him from the fields again,  
And I shall pluck the flowers where lieth now  
The icy hoar frost.”

A fragment of Pocket Mouthed Meg's favourite residence still perches picturesquely high above the river Passer just where it enters Merano by a deep-cut gorge, to race merrily through the town and join the Adige across the valley. Meg's other, and more fortress-like residence, Schloss Tirol, stands on the hillside within view. I have read somewhere that Meg, having been forced into a marriage of which she disapproved, led the bridal train to this, her Schloss, which is approached through a long tunnel. Once through with her own retinue, the portcullis was smartly dropped, and Meg entered into residence without her incubus. Bright young thing! Quite in the twentieth century style, except that the husband would have been of her own choosing, not by any means imposed from without. I wish I knew how she came by such a mouth.





THE TAPFNERWEG, MERANO

I have seen a good many portraits of her, none of them of any merit as paintings, but all very concerned with doing justice to the famous mouth.

There must be immense stores of history woven into the thirty-seven old castles I have counted around Merano; many are in ruin, a few are restored and inhabited, most of them are beautiful. In blossom-time, the only time of year when I do not know it, Merano must look wonderful, for it is a great fruit-growing place; in autumn apple trees and grape vines are burdened almost beyond reason and belief, apple trees one and all carefully propped, grapes hanging like a dusky purple curtain above one's head from the trellises. Grape juice fresh from the fruit can be had everywhere; it is a refreshing drink. The best grapes near Merano grow on a hilltop which divides the main valley and the Passeier valley—the Küchelberg—it runs high above the town and parallel with it. Along the side of this hog's back has been cut a very pleasant pathway, and to pace along it of a fine afternoon towards sunset brings one near a peace that passes understanding.

Walks in general are many and delightful, but not at all of first quality judged by mountain-walk standards; one misses the true mountain style, climb one never so earnestly; it is all too sane and tame. Himself and I once walked from Sterzing (now Vipiteno! save the mark) to Merano over the Jaufen pass, long before it had any road. The first part was through scented pine-woods, then came the short turf of the pass, which persisted to the very top. Then down to St. Leonhard,

where we arrived in the early afternoon and stayed the night. The churchyard there, with its high built-out wall commanding the valley, was the scene of one of Andreas Hofer's fights. Himself recalled the fact that as a small boy he was a great reader of history, and had a particular admiration for Andreas Hofer and the role he had played in the Napoleonic Wars. At his prep-school the boys were asked to name their favourite hero, and to write an essay on the spot about him. Young Johnnie electrified his fellows by declaring for Andreas Hofer, a name of which they had apparently never heard, and by writing the essay accounted the best.

Next morning we passed Sand, and the large, good-looking inn of which Hofer had been the proprietor. And so, after passing the shady sweet-chestnut woods of Schönnä, on to find Merano very hot; but it was comfortable sitting-out weather for seeing the open-air peasant play of "Andreas Hofer." This was staged in a very adequate way in a big level meadow; and, the tragic history being not much more than 100 years old, all the weapons, headgear, and most of the dresses were the originals, which makes a vast difference in the look of an open-air daylight pageant. There was, too, an amazing amount of acting talent; one got no impression at all of amateurishness. I remember that before the first performance of this play the whole of the company, in costume, paraded through Merano; in the midst of them, seated in a landau, was Franz Josef, not an impersonation, but the Emperor himself. Thus it seemed

something far deeper than just a theatre venture, it looked more like a demonstration of faithful defenders of their emperor, by the descendants of the too-faithful Andreas Hofer! During the performance both actors and audience seemed stirred to the depths by the drama—I know that we were. The Empress Elizabeth was not there on that occasion, but it was at Merano, in later years, that I had just one glimpse of her. She was staying at Schloss Trautmansdorf, in Untermals, a suburb of Merano, together with her youngest daughter Marie Valerie, then just engaged to a young Archduke. During an afternoon stroll we came on the whole party, just at a narrow bridge in a narrow road in the neighbourhood of the Schloss. Seeing the little fan held up to her face, we made ourselves as inconspicuous as possible at the roadside, and she came on at her extraordinarily graceful walk, the walk that only a lovely woman could have, it seemed. She was very slim, dressed in a plain black woollen dress, buttoned from neck to foot down the front; in spite of this austerity of costume she radiated charm, and one felt it very difficult not to look up, though, knowing her views and seeing the little fan, there was no doubt as to what was one's duty. And this reminds me of another encounter, which was no encounter, with high life, at Merano long ago. I was in my teens, and my mother and I had installed ourselves comfortably for the winter in a hotel to which in due course came the Duchess of Mecklenburg Strelitz—with a grown-up son, and a not very extensive suite. Still, the first floor had to be

cleared of all other visitors except ourselves; I can only suppose that there was enough room for the Grand Duchess, without disturbing us, for we were not asked to move upstairs. Our rooms consisted of a sitting-room and two bedrooms, and I had a piano, hired for the winter. Apparently the young Prince Johann's sitting-room was next or next but one, and he also had a piano. Therefrom sprang the most fine-spun, delicate of musical flirtations. He was a very good pianist, myself, in those days, not too bad. I would give out a theme, then pause; very soon the young neighbour would start improvising in a masterly manner. Anon, the reverse would take place; he would announce an unmistakable theme, and pause. I would improvise, but with tremblings in my shoes, for he was so very much better than myself at that game. So far as I remember, we never met; but I do think it was rather a pretty and ethereal romance. The twentieth century will say anæmic, perhaps, and doubtless be right.

Another musical memory, without romance, but quite interesting to me at the time, was the occasion when I accompanied Signor Foli (strangely enough, an Irishman, though of great renown as a bass singer) at a charity concert at Menton, where he kindly gave his services. He had chosen a song from Mendelssohn's "Son and Stranger." I asked him well beforehand if there were any points on which he would wish to instruct me; he said: "No, child, only—don't hang like a millstone round my neck." Easy enough to convert

the already Presto song into Prestissimo in my practising; when rehearsal-time came he had to cry for mercy. But all went very well at the concert, though rather miraculously so, for the accompanist in general of the other singers proved so utterly incompetent that they all "struck" and plumped for me, even though I would be reading at sight. That was, very luckily, my one virtue; I did read very comfortably at sight, and did not have to refuse the agitated singers—I think, indeed, utter absorption in reading correctly saved me from any sort of nervousness.

After a gloriously sunny winter at Meran, during which we never saw rain, though occasionally it was obvious that it had rained in the night, in late January it began to snow and continued to do so for thirty hours. We had one glorious sleigh drive, my first and last, and then, being spoilt children, decided to leave Meran for Italy (heavens! shall I ever forget the cold at Milan? And we deserved it, for having deserted a perfectly good climate). In consequence of the snow I had had to abandon my daily ride around Meran, and so had failed to wear a new pair of riding boots which had just come for me from Vienna. In all innocence I packed them in the depths of my trunk, and had a severe shock at Ala, the Austro-Italian frontier in those days, when two Customs officials, prowling among my belongings, emerged, each with a shiny patent-leather long-legged boot with perfectly new soles, which each slung over his shoulder. Coldly shepherding me between them, they led the way towards a higher



official, who, quite convinced of my guilt, made me pay very smartly for my attempt at smuggling.

In pre-war days and even pre-cograil days Himself and I much liked staying on the Mendel-pass. The Mendelhof was then a very simple, very clean, large hotel, the family of the proprietors, by name Spretter, all actively interested in the daily running of the place. We have known and much liked four of the Austrian hotel-owning families, the Spretters, the Oesterreichers, the Menardis and Frau Emma, and found them all quite memorable people. Walks at the Mendel were many, though apt to lead very abruptly downhill. The way to the Penegal, however, the chief view-point, is fairly level for a considerable distance, then rises to the top of the hill. And there were many other hillside and woodside scrambles. One walk I well remember, for it really was strenuous. We strolled up the lower slopes of the Roenberg, though it was visibly deep in snow—not "open." But being disinclined to abandon what elevation we had gained we went on and on. The spring sun was making the snow soft; drifts were very deep. Continually we plunged in above our knees, quite often to our waists; truly it needed all my strength and native obstinacy to reach the top, even though Himself was an excellent leader and judge of the best route to take. Well, we did it; but looking back I cannot help thinking it was an unwise jaunt. It was hard to convince the hotel folk that we had really reached the summit, in that state of the snow.

San Martino di Castrozza provided some good walks.

Out over the Colbricon pass, to Paneveggio, and back over the Rolle pass gave us most thrilling views of the spectacular San Martino group of mountains on our way home. It is fun, on almost any pass, for the pedestrian, making a bee-line for his objective, to watch the high road looping and looping and making about ten times as much labour of it; one feels so superior; this is specially noticeable from the Rolle pass down to San Martino. Another scramble, up the lower slopes of the Cimon della Pala, provided other joys as well as my first meeting with a "Dusty Miller" auricula, as already recorded. But on the whole, we felt it rather a baffling place for walks; the few obvious ones being accomplished, the real heights were too formidable for me, and the lower scrambles not quite interesting enough. So that San Martino was soon used up.

One unforgettable pleasure here was the listening to nightingales at night. We would stroll along a certain road at about ten o'clock and be sure of an orgy of song, so that never afterwards could one admit uncertainty about just *how* that bird sings. To be quite frank, I would still rather hear a blackbird at his best and loudest, or an American meadow lark; but the San Martino nightingales were glorious, too. On our way down to the main valley from Madonna di Campiglio we came on a spot where they were singing all day long; it had not the same appeal as at night—the stage should be properly set for a nightingale display.

Madonna di Campiglio was not altogether perfect,

either. The village is just out of sight of the adorable rosy domes of the Brenta, and that is a continual irritation to one who wishes to gaze at the lights and shadows the livelong day on those superb summits: another small grievance was that at the start of every walk one had perforce to go along such orderly well-kept paths before tackling the desired route that one grew a little restive. That it was not altogether tame country, however, was proved by the following happenings: Some of our friends having gone on a picnic jaunt to a nearby waterfall, a member of the party snapshotted the group at the foot of the fall, the cliff as background. When the film was developed a bear was disclosed, looking down at the party from above! In the early summer days when the herds of cattle are first taken out, the cowherds keep up an unrelenting noise all day; bears are at that time so famished after their long winter's fast that they are a real danger. One more bear story, an incident which occurred much nearer the village. Leading up directly from the hotel to a plateau above called Campo Carlo Magno, is a pleasant little gully with a small stream rushing down its middle. Evidently the stream has its flood times, for the soft sandstone bordering it has been hollowed out into many a bay. Ordinarily the path is clear, the stream tiny, and the way very pleasant. One day a Nanna, leading her two young charges, a boy and a girl, strolling up this glen, came within sight of a bear curled up fast asleep in a sun-warmed cradle or rocky recess just by the path. It is said that, tucking a small

child under each arm, she made the journey back to Campiglio in record time; the bear did not awaken. We came across nothing so spectacular—nothing more fearsome than marmots, ptarmigan, and one snake. But the Brenta domes from Monte Spinale, rosy and so exquisite in form, made us all the more regretful that Campiglio was not placed half a mile or so lower in the valley. The big, simple rambling hotel contained a surprising number of guests; it appeared to be a refuge for the Great of all Europe, who were keen only on doffing their greatness. Higher up, on the Campo Carlo Magno, stood the new hotel and the fine new golf course; this naturally attracted the younger and more sportive visitors. A yearly tennis tournament, however, was held at Campiglio itself, and to it flocked the young and hefty of both resorts. To his own immense surprise Himself won the Men's Singles. We could only think it was due to his steadiness; a less spectacular player was never seen, though I had noted his ability to score, in many times and places. There were so many athletic-looking young men at Campiglio playing against him—from Holland, Germany, Austria, Italy, and they made such brilliant and startling strokes (and, of course, very often just did not!) that his victory was extremely surprising to us. It was genuine enough, for all that.

Driving down from Campiglio to Brescia, the upper valleys through which we passed seemed to contain more lovely women and girls than all the rest of Italy put together. Straight, stalwart, noble-looking, they

were working quietly in the fields or moving stately about the villages—a delight to the eye. Further down in the plain towards Brescia no such beauty could be observed, even if there, for dust, dust of an incredible density, arose, screening, enveloping, choking. We went no further in Brescia than the railway station at which we were to pick up the train to Milan; and of this we carried away more than an unpleasing impression of dirt and flies, for the dish of dubious-looking macaroni, which we ordered mainly to pass the time till our train appeared, must have contained some unwholesomeness; next day we both developed troubles from which we did not get free for some time, so that our stay in Milan in summer heat was longer than we intended, and the gloss of our mountain holiday sadly dimmed, by the time we reached London.



### III.—FRANCE, IN PEACE AND WAR

**F**RANCE, apart from Paris, was not very well known to Himself and me; not that we felt disinclined to investigate; far from it, but that one corner, the South-West Basque corner, appealed to us so specially, that we seldom strayed beyond it. I have record of seven visits to Biarritz between the beginning of 1920 and 1930, and I had already known Biarritz in my youth in both summer and winter. The memories of my long-ago hunting days, and of Queen Victoria in her little chaise are quite vivid; then came the extremely palmy Edwardian days; then again the fashionable vogue when the Prince of Wales, now Duke of Windsor, brought in a great crowd of English, in somewhat recent years. The place has grown steadily uglier and less homogeneous; nowadays it has the look of a town hastily and heedlessly rebuilding after a bombardment. I really don't see how buildings can be planned and planted in such haphazard fashion! Basque villages untouched by "development" are by

no means like that—Ustaritz, Cambo, Sarre, are orderly and good to look at; St. Jean Pied de Port is almost too orderly—a toy city set on a hill, within its wall, reminding one of the small decorative cities in the background of an Early Italian picture. Bayonne, too, has a most beautiful street leading up to the twin-spired cathedral. (I remember the town wall of Bayonne in being, and the gateways through it.)

But one has to turn a blind eye to Biarritz's sins for the sake of the perfect ozone-laden air. There are few places so blest. And the rhythmic, almost poetic line of Pyrenees against the sky—that is an abiding beauty to be thankful for. The golf and tennis, the pelota and football, Casino, cinemas (whose programmes work in co-operation)—and now and then a thoroughly good piano recital, all do their best to keep one amused. It always was a good place for writing, and Himself could be seen any morning seated at our south-facing sitting-room window quietly working till lunch time, when we made our way to the grill room of the Bar Basque, and found excellent cooking. The freedom from social duties, the telephone, interviewers and all such, was very good for the soul of the writer.

The most notable excursion that I remember was to Fuentarabia on a Good Friday, on which day, yearly, there was a church procession through the streets. Immense plaster holy figures or groups dressed in velvets and satins and bejewelled, carried on platforms by about eight men apiece, and accompanied by peasants bearing enormous candles, perhaps 4 ft. long,

and alight—all this followed by chanting crowds of men and women, and the whole of the religious body available, with vestments and swinging censers, winding and swaying through the narrow streets, the huge richly-dressed effigies borne head-high, and vibrating slightly with the movements of the bearers—out into the sun, anon into the shadow, then stark against the clear sky—it was a striking picture. On another visit to Fuentarabia we were shown the rich collection of vestments used at the (proxy) wedding of Louis XIV and Marie de Medici which took place at St. Jean de Luz. How the vestments came to Fuentarabia, across the Spanish border, I don't know; it is a very fine collection. I wonder if, in 1937, they are still uninjured?

At the end of one of our Biarritz sojourns we motored across to Avignon, spending one night at Pau, already well known to us, one night at Carcassonne, with its very fine, well-preserved Cité on a hill, one night at Nîmes with its perfect little Maison Carrée, and its Arena, one night at Avignon whence we visited Arles, and passed through Tarascon—very disappointing when not illumined by Daudet.

On one occasion we went on from Biarritz to Argelès for a stay, and there we found notably good walks. It was wonderfully lovely spring weather, almond trees in bloom against a blue sky, hepaticas and primroses everywhere. Short drives, or small railway journeys took us to fresh country any day. The Cirque de Gavarnie and Lourdes were our only disappointments



—the former had not quite awakened from Winter Sleep and Lourdes was in the same state, consequently both were looking their worst, or I hope so! We also took train to Caunterets, being bound for one of the many Ports d'Espagne of hereabouts, that lay above—just on the Spanish frontier. It was under snow still, but at no great distance. We laboured on, and came to a little bridge, and beside it traces of mules, and a camp fire, of hard-trampled snow among the pines, in fact a perfect smugglers' rest, or place of exchange of goods, let us say. On the way down we developed a distaste for the tea we had ordered at what looked like the best hotel that was open, as we passed through Caunterets on our upward route, or rather, for the hotel people, who had looked very queer, sinister and sulky. However, it seemed altogether too mean to slip by and go straight to the railway station, and we girded up our loins, went in, and had one of the very best teas of our lives! We certainly did not deserve it.

It was at Argelès that we first met the larger Pyrenean sheep dog; enormous, that is St. Bernard sized, with coat as thick as a chow's, almost entirely white with a few orange patches, splendid domed heads, and quarters without that distressing look of cow-hocks which so many St. Bernards have. Noble dogs, indeed! So strong-looking, well-proportioned, and amiable, so far as I ever saw.

Himself and I never inhabited the Riviera for very long, nor with any very great pleasure. I confess that

I think our long ago days of excursions up the Gorbio valley, up to Castellar, to Ste. Agnèse, to Bellenda, all from Menton, remain in memory as the most pleasurable moments, our tastes being always distressingly simple. And many walks from Grasse were in the same category.

One of my early independent memories was of the Riviera earthquake, during a stay that my mother and I were making at Nice. We were settled in a much-favoured hotel, the Cosmopolitan by name, famous for its cuisine, and continually full to the brim, mostly of English and Americans. It was the culminating point of the season, Shrove Tuesday, and after a gala dinner most of the guests went over to the Casino, where a big masked ball was taking place. My mother, not altogether approving of this kind of gaiety, by reason of her Quaker upbringing, had vetoed the ball, and daughter, slightly disgruntled and bleak, retired to bed at the usual time. About six o'clock next morning I was awakened by a severe shaking, a creaking, and a sort of frictional shuffling sound of surface against surface, very sinister. Being always remarkably wide-awake at once, I shouted to my mother in the next room: "This is an earthquake!" darted out of bed, unlocked my door into the corridor lest it should jam and imprison us (my bright idea!), rushed off to my mother, who by this time was praying vigorously, embraced her, dashed back to my own room, climbed to bed again under the mosquito curtain, and awaited developments. Still the shaking went on with that

unfamiliar sound of creaking and shuffling; presently a patch or two of plaster fell from the ceiling. Then came a really dramatic effect; though perfectly innocuous it nearly drew a bleat of terror from me, as the light was not bright and the mosquito curtain did not help clear vision. My wardrobe, with the usual mirror panel front, catching the sharp light of dawn, very slowly swung open, and clothes fell softly, limply, out on to the floor. It gave the impression of a slowly widening gap in the wall, somehow, in that uncertain light, and was truly alarming. But the creaking and shuffling now subsided; my mother, recovered from her prayers, was standing by my bed, our small travelling flask of brandy in her hand— a dose for herself and one for daughter. Just as she was handing my portion the trembling began again; a much slighter affair and over at once. Going to the window to see how the world looked, an exquisite morning, clear, still, limpid was seen; one steadfast star still hung there, awake. Surely one had imagined the whole thing! But the plaster fragments and those clothes lying prone in front of my open wardrobe could not be explained away. Soon after seven we were dressed, and in due course rang for petit déjeuner. It was long, very long before a scared-looking waiter appeared; he told us we were the only people left in upstairs rooms; everyone was assembled in the glass-roofed palm-trimmed hall—the Winter Garden it was called; and that he was too scared to bring up our breakfast tray. However, we finally persuaded him to do so; and just as the heroic

youth set down our tray there came one more small shock. This was the last straw; mother, daughter, and gallant waiter clattered to the ground floor, and found there a motley crew of people, dressed and undressed, and much weeping and wailing, much gnashing of teeth, and some folk unable to gnash, having omitted their teeth. One or two women, quite hysterical, demanded one thing only—to get away. And this they soon managed to do, one of them still in her nightdress with fur coat over it when she arrived in Paris. Wiseacres thought it very risky to travel before bridges, rails, and other works of man had been tested and found ~~safe~~. By the afternoon I regret to say the germ of panic had grown in most of us. I could scarcely read my shaky handwriting as I laboriously acquainted our relatives in England with our eccentric doings. That night all the guests camped in the Winter Garden. There was one scare when many rushed out into the street, but I must say I felt nothing. And my nerves must have come to heel, for I spent most of the night playing billiards with a Dutch friend—a girl with an immense string of names and an immense sense of humour. During the next few days trains for Paris were uncomfortably packed; it was, however, an early Easter that year, and we did not like the idea of going north so soon. There was plenty of minor damage to look at in Nice, too. I think the most piquant show was a bedroom with the front wall entirely gone. There stood the bed, a chair, a chest of drawers, looking absurdly like a bedroom in a doll's house, but it was

life-size, and had been no joke to the occupant when it occurred, I opine.

Monte Carlo was a great solace during the ten days that we remained on the littoral; in the rooms, playing Roulette or Trente et Quarante one easily forgot such trifles as earthquakes and nerves. Finally we took train for Paris, bearing with us some jewellery and bank notes entrusted to our care by our hotel manager in Nice; they had been left in a wall pocket pinned by the bedside of that friend who had landed in Paris in her nightdress with her fur coat over it. I did not hear of a single thing being stolen in that long-ago disturbance of Nature.

I don't think that Monte Carlo ever excited me beyond reason. But one little incident I recall with pleasure. Having doubtless had as much bad luck as I felt I deserved, I had rationed myself to 10 francs a day for a time. On the way out of the rooms one afternoon I placed one five franc piece on No. 17 and won, *en plein*. In the evening I invested my other five franc piece on No. 26 and won, *en plein*. Those two numbers are situated one on each side of zero, and I felt it was a good harvest to reap from such doubtfully good soil. If this sort of thing happened more often Monte would be a more dangerous place than it is. Even so, I did know one amiable, well-bred Austrian nobleman who undoubtedly gambled himself into—suicide. He showed no sign to me of his desperate state, and I was profoundly shocked at the news of his death. That again was in the long-ago days when we

played with real coins (and notes, of course), so that one of the most characteristic and enticing sounds of the place, the silvery, rather musical clink of coins being raked in or tossed out was still to be heard. Nowadays one buys counters. . . .

The first year of the War brought with it such a crop of heavy tasks that Himself and I had little thought of anything else. I think I may say that he became the Appeal writer par excellence: for refugees, for camp libraries, for vegetables for the Fleet, for cigarettes to soldiers, for London horses to be better fed, for Belgians to have a good Xmas dinner, for the Nation's Fund for Nurses, for the Children's Jewel Fund, for many another good cause, and for every gift book that appeared, to the best of my memory, something was written by him. I was glad that we were able to contribute in the concrete ourselves as well as to be so continually begging from others; very early we had sent off all saddlery and horse-cloths that we could spare, Zeiss field glasses, a motor ambulance to France, a motor launch, later on (the John and Ada!) to Gallipoli; all royalties on literary work sold in U.S.A. (not then in the War, be it noted) were consecrated to War Funds. Endless money appeals, too, of course, were written; there was no let-up possible for those who were not in the fighting line, nor should there be, we felt. At the very beginning there seemed only one thing that mattered: To get going on something, or anything; not to sit and wait till the ideal thing came one's way. And so, one found oneself doing things

which could be much better done by someone else, such as flannel shirt making; presently that resolved itself into giving the work to someone who was pinched for money but glad to sew, and earn. I never dropped sock-knitting, however, for there are always small gaps of time that can be best filled by knitting. I accomplished just under 200 pairs, and of comfortable wool and shape, I hope. So the miserable days went on, and by autumn, 1916, Himself and I grew too restless and unhappy, and wishful to be nearer the heart of things. Himself took up intensive training in Swedish massage, I being the body on which both teacher and pupil demonstrated and concentrated; and in ~~November~~, having fulfilled all conditions and qualified for the work, he and I went off to France to a Hôpital Benevole run by an English friend, he as masseur, I as lingère and general helper—i.e., keeper of the house linen and clothing for the poilus, secretary, packing of prisoners' parcels, helper in organising amusements, mender and patcher of garments, and so forth.

The start for this new bit of life was not auspicious; we were held up by fog at Southampton for 19 hours. When at last we started and lights had to go out, we were somehow conscious of innumerable black beetles, or cockroaches. We slipped across the Channel blamelessly enough, and Havre looked lovely and utterly serene in the clear night, with winking lights like stars all about it. One felt that unmistakable lightening of the spirit that comes the moment one lands in France, the something that says one is breathing a brighter,

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sharper air, that blood runs a little quicker in the veins over here. Paris at that time was looking much the same as usual; a few more uniforms perhaps, and at the railway terminus the fully equipped soldiers returning to the front certainly gave a grim impression of the heroic and terrible struggle, whatever the individual insignificance might be, of each heavily-burdened poilu.

Our arrival at Le Martouret outside the little town of Die, Drôme, was of a rainy November morning. We very soon settled into our quarters--part of a small house at right angles to the main building of a summer bathing establishment which had been converted into a convalescent hospital for poilus, especially for neurasthenic and rheumatic cases, though we had, of course, wounded cases as well. The poilus, we found, for the most part, a very interesting crew: well-mannered, intelligent, not in the least gauche or self-conscious in the English way, and, considering what they had already been through, remarkably cheerful. Some had come from Verdun, and would go back there; all they wished to do meanwhile was to forget it, in so far as their physical state would permit. Yes, they were a gallant crew, ever-changing yet almost always with the same main characteristics; the more we saw of them the more we liked them. Himself worked very hard and conscientiously at massage: he had some excellent results, to cheer him. The late afternoon hours, when my other chores were finished, were devoted to accompanying our poilus, among whom

there were some very good voices, in their light hearted pretty *Petits Chansons*, old and new. I still have a few of these songs.

The townspeople of Die, too, were full of good feeling towards us; all the rather formal aloof manner of the French was gone, under the stress of war time. They told us their family history, they confided the problems of their daily life and what arrangements were made to carry on in each individual case, they asked advice and tendered it, wept over the loss of beloved sons—for the little city had lost in undue proportion to its population—all were brotherly and still more sisterly, for naturally there were not very many men at home. I sometimes think the brave good spirit of Die must have emanated from *Monsieur le Curé*, a most remarkably charming old man. The Mother Superior of the Convent was also a fine specimen, though in an entirely different way; dominating and very able, one felt she could have as fitly ruled a realm as a convent. The little old city, its walls and gateways still quite intact, was full of character; outside was a pleasant country of foothills, of one considerable mountain, the *Grandaz*, and one pass—not open at that time of year. The *Dauphiné* farms and houses, with rosy-tiled roofs, white walls, and dove-grey shutters, always looked just right in the landscape; I don't remember any architectural horrors anywhere, either in the town or the surrounding country, and that is saying a great deal. On Sundays we usually made a fairly long excursion, accompanied

by three or four of the more active of our poilus. But when winter came, as it did on January 7th, 1917, it was terribly severe; there was no let up during the rest of our stay. It was preceded on January 6th by the most exquisite day I have ever seen.

We left in March for a short rest in the southern sunshine, near Marseilles. Just before leaving our hospital I had tidied my linen room with care, ranging house-linen, clothing, that is underwear, flannel shirts, pullovers, socks, etc., on their various shelves. (I may say that by far the best clothes sent in answer to my appeals were from the Canadian Red Cross organisation, sent by their Paris dépôt.) Tucking everything under heavy linen dust covers, I was moving about a good deal on a rather rickety stool with very wide spacing between the slats of wood. Naturally, I slipped, or the stool tipped, one leg went down between the slats and got severely nipped on the shinbone. Normally this would have been of very little import to me, but I presume germs are rife in a hospital atmosphere, and to my surprise, during my little rest-cure I was far from being at rest; it was a troublesome shin indeed all the time of our stay at Cassis, near Marseilles. And Himself had an attack of sciatica, so that we were very eligible for a quiet little sojourn at the quiet little port. But first we had spent two days at Arles, and done our painful duty at sight-seeing of which there happens to be a good deal: The town museum, a beautiful church door, the arena, and an enclosure full of carved stone sarcophagi; also the catacombs which

rambled about under the hotel. On a later visit to the arena I was grieved to see the actual arena floor being hastily besprinkled with fresh sand, a dark patch in particular; the day being Monday I fear one may put two and two together and conclude that Sunday's bull-fight had left traces. At Cassis we were housed in a very simple, but wonderfully clean hotel, and were comfortable enough in a room with a red tiled floor, and an open fire-place fed by eucalyptus logs, smelling most delicious as they burned. These and olive logs, enlivened with big resinous pine cones, make the most enjoyable kind of fire, I think. And this kind of room and fire we had also found at Arles when we staggered in late at night from the crowded train, where we had passed hours standing in the corridor—two among the rest of the human sardines. Trains were terribly packed at this time, and just doing the best they could as to keeping to time; the best was not very good.

At Cassis we came upon a villa very much to our liking; it was superbly situated on a "Greek"-looking point not far from the little harbour. We liked the look of it so much that on our homeward journey we called on the owner, an advocat in Marseilles, to learn if there were any chance for us to buy it. It was soon clear that he had no intention of abandoning his summer villa, but, being a polite man, he adopted the "Mr. Jorkins" pose—"his wife was much attached to the villa and naturally he could refuse her nothing"; and he rolled his eyes in a manner to convey to us that Madame was nothing less than a combined Venus,

Helen, Cleopatra and Minerva. So, the English retired, having arranged that should the situation change, they would receive due information of the fact. Incidentally, we had noticed an odd-looking elderly squat man once or twice in the street before entering the advocate's; we left him sitting in that polite man's waiting room; as we entered a bank which was our next place of call he turned up again. If this was a specimen of the French detective methods during the war, I cannot praise them, for he was most conspicuous. And I fear we were most disappointing to him.

Lyon was our next staying place; Himself had been, by now, asked to report on all he could see of the French methods of treatment, cure, and re-education of the disabled soldier. We carefully inspected the Ecole Joffre, and also a big curative establishment up on the Louvielle hill outside the city. Again we were struck by the intelligence and determined cheerfulness of outlook on the part of the disabled; even though this should be only temporary we felt it was marvellous enough, considering all things. In Paris the atmosphere was by now more sombre; perhaps the gravity of what had just happened in Russia, the revolution of spring, 1917, and its effect on the Allies, had penetrated more deeply here. We saw wonders of surgery and treatment at the Grand Palais, the Maison Blanche, St. Maurice, and one or two other curative establishments, and hospitals. And we went over the Renault motor works organised for munition making; all was in full swing, and interesting.

And so, to England again in the cockroach haunted s.s. *Hantonia*; but we were more hardened now and thought but little about the creatures, as we lay in our dark stateroom, with Gieve waistcoats handy.

After the refreshment that a change of work had given, Himself was able to settle to writing again with a view to giving all proceeds to War Funds. It was the most profitable national work that he could do, he being over age, and much too short-sighted for active service. But before long he was asked to take over the editorship of a magazine devoted to the interests of the Disabled Soldier; he decided to do so, provided he could reconstruct it and rename it—*Reveille* it came to be called. He aimed at having voluntary contributions from the most distinguished authors and artists, as well as technical articles for the practical and immediate guidance of the disabled. For the first number, which appeared in August, 1918, among the contributors were: Rudyard Kipling, Max Beerbohm, J. M. Barrie, Joseph Conrad, E. V. Lucas, Jerome K. Jerome, and some of the departmental heads in the Ministry of Pensions, as well as technical articles by medicos of renown. The work in the more technical section, the gleaning and tabulating of information for the guidance of the disabled, was really tremendous; no one seemed to know where exactly the special treatments for special disabilities were to be found. An exhaustive and laboriously compiled list of convalescent homes, institutions, artificial limb constructors and so on, were tracked down; the correspondence over

articles to be written, whether literary or technical, was unending. The people to be consulted, one way or another, included Sir Robert Armstrong-Jones, Sir Berkeley Moynihan, Sir George Bullock, Colonel Stanton, Major Mitchell, Sir Mathew Nathan, John Hodge, Sir Arthur Boscawen. The first number sold 30,000 copies at 2s. 6d., and had a great Press. Even though it was to be a quarterly the second number had to be envisaged at once; the first having appeared in August, 1918. And again all hands were at it, gathering in material, tabulating, verifying, arranging. We had just as brilliant a list of contributors, all so gladly, heartily voluntary; and C. S. Evans of Heinemann's, the sub-editor, was of the greatest assistance in the practical side of magazine editing. Again a great Press and a great sale, as indeed was to be expected with such contributors as: Thomas Hardy, Robert Bridges (Laureate), G. K. Chesterton, Owen Seaman, Stacy Aumonier, Siegfried Sassoon, Robert Nichols, Robert Graves, Neil Lyon, W. H. Hudson, Maurice Baring, John Drinkwater, Hilaire Belloc, Laurence Binyon—these were spread over two coming numbers. But now began the first signs of a rift in the lute. Editors of other magazines, having to pay their contributors, began to complain of unfair competition; one would have supposed that their common gratitude towards the disabled soldier would have kept every comment of that kind out of court, but it was not so. After all, editors have to live, and they certainly did not fail in making out a case for themselves. Added to this, some



articles in *Reveille* which suggested that certain things could be still better done than they were at present irked the new head of the Ministry of Pensions. Sir Joshua Flynn, who had taken Sir Mathew Nathan's post, and he seized the opportunity to express his known hostility to the magazine scheme. Feeling that not to retain some critical and independent attitude in *Reveille* was to seriously mislead the public, Himself decided to resign the editorship after the third number had appeared. Thereafter, the Ministry discontinued *Reveille*, and it died, regretted, so far as one could judge, by a good many people. Certainly, no such 2s. 6d. worth has ever been offered to the public, before or since, and surely in no such good cause.

I find I have a record of one post, the first post on November 14th, 1917; this was well before the *Reveille* work came to enormously swell the postbag:

1. Request for autograph and for an expression of sentiment about the War, for a "War Album."
2. Details of National Bonds.
3. Request for autograph, and for an expression of opinion on "Death—what after?"—from America.
4. Letter of regret from a distinguished Swede that Himself is not going to assist him in massage work.
5. Request from a Welsh gentleman for money to personally publish a book he has written.
6. Letter from a lady asking Himself to influence the authorities to announce that books sent out to our fighting men are not sent to German prisoners here.
7. Letter from Himself's American publisher.

8. Letter enclosing documents on the suppression of free speech, asking for his influence to counteract it.

9. Receipt for donation from National Fund for Nurses, with announcement of Grand Concert, urging one to go.

10. Letter begging for Pension votes.

11. Letter from U.S.A. asking for autograph.

12. Letter from a niece asking for sweets for a bazaar.

13. Letter from a godchild, asking for news and help in her literary work.

14. Letter from wife of dramatist, begging Himself's help in a new scheme of war assistance.

15. Letter from a lady asking for the same in another scheme.

16. Receipt for Club subscription.

17. Two unreadable magazines.

18. Letter from a friend asking us to stay.

This was one post, only; the date being of a war year I can take it on myself to say that we neither wrote nor received anything like so many friendly, personal letters as we would have done at a date pre- or post-War, for everyone was too occupied and tense to be able to write a normal number of letters.

Occasionally our postbag would be enlivened by such contributions as the following:

"SIR,

"Your account of Lichfelder in *Daily Mail* is damned rot and untrue, there was no such person, and only 1 suicide ever committed. You're worthy of the liar who told you, ass of the first water."

This, one need hardly say, was in reference to a wartime sketch in which Himself depicted a German spy, self-convicted, who hanged himself in his cell. There is no point in the sketch being fact or imagined, but as it happens, it was absolutely vouched for as fact by a high official who had very good reason to know every detail of the case.

And the following:

"I write from a jungle camp in a remote part of the Burma forests, where my husband's work lies. We have just met a fellow forester, and he at once asked whether I had any books to lend him as his literature had run out. I replied I had only one book which I was re-reading, and not being a new book it would probably be of no interest to him--it was 'The Forsyte Saga.' He replied that it was the *one* book he always carried round with him, having read it many times. It struck me as a coincidence that might be of interest to you--that two dwellers in the wild should rely on the 'Saga' for their sole literary diet, in a life in which reading is a greater solace than it is at home."

And the following:

"Last week my cousin and I had the mixed pleasure of witnessing your play 'Justice.' We have also been depressed by some of your novels; and this evening a discussion has arisen as to your motive in writing. I hold that in presenting these problems you hope that if not yourself, some other at least may find their solution.

"My cousin on the other hand maintains that to you

life must inevitably be as you describe it, and that you have no hope of a solution, but rather a half-humorous acquiescence in the facts of life—in short that you are only saved from suicide by a sense of humour and proportion.

“In case you are good enough to answer this—we do hope you will—I enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope.”

And this for courage in venturing in an unknown tongue:

“Would you kindly Give your permissivin for the Author of, ‘Forsyte Saga’—to be interppaled in to the S . . . B . . . here they are very much behind the times with auct books of the like your books to become more Knew.

“Y hope that you will give your consent as yam not in the posion to pay the Author anything but by very much oblided to you if you will give your Consenton those.

“Yours faithfulit.”

And this for sheer point and brevity:

“RT. HON.,

“Humbly signed admirer of Your works takes the liberty to beseech most courteous Rt. Hon. to give him an autography.

“By anticipation thanks for it most humble.”

Transcending these efforts are two specimens I myself have received during the last year or so. One was a request from a Russian refugee mother, entirely

unknown to me, writing from Germany, her daughter, aged fifteen, was being educated at a North London Convent. She wished me to receive her adorable daughter for three weeks, the holiday time during which the Convent was unavailable. Whitsuntide. I replied that my plans were already made, and that I was unable to comply. (As a fact I was bound for a visit to friends on Lake Garda, to be followed at once by retirement to a London nursing home, and an operation while I was at the top of my holiday form.) I then received a very abusive letter from the Russian mother, saying that the writer had never been so brutally treated in her life, that if my noble husband had been alive all would have been different, that it was incredible that I should grudge her adorable daughter a bed and food, that it would not have cost me too much money to give her hospitality among my own daughters (I never had any daughters, but that was no obstacle to the lady's outpouring of wrath). I thought perforce of the American humorist's saying: "There's nothing can act madder than a mother!" to which I felt inclined to add: "Unless it is a Russian mother!"

One more brief specimen: A Chinese university professor, desiring to come over here for six months to acquire facility in English, wrote to me, on discovering that his expenses would be £600 and that he possessed only £300 towards them, asking me to forward the remaining £300 and to receive him to live with me for the duration of his visit.

I have a few more examples of the courageous nature of unknown Correspondents, but unfortunately a good many were destroyed before the idea came to us to preserve them as curios.

The editorship of *Reveille* entailed much correspondence and much travelling, from the moment when in spring, 1917, Himself began to inspect the curative and re-educative systems in vogue in France for the disabled soldier, and later on paid many visits to the War hospitals dotted all over England, to investigate all sorts of specialised treatment, collection of all sorts of informative material for use in the magazine.

And so, on very different lines, did the work as President of the P.E.N. entail on us much correspondence and much travelling. This Club, founded in 1921 by Mrs. Dawson Scott, had chosen Himself as President, and so he remained during the following eleven years of his life. We took part in many preliminary arrangements and meetings in various countries where centres were already, or about to be, inaugurated: in Paris, Brussels, Stockholm, New York, Prague, South Africa; and I, as Himself's personal secretary, always found plenty to do. By 1923 the first international Congress was held in London; every year since then has seen a Congress in one country or another. The general lines on these occasions were: mornings devoted to business sittings for the discussion of questions of international import; notice would already have been given of the subjects for discussion, so that all views were well matured beforehand; afternoons devoted to sight-

seeing or a country excursion; evenings devoted to a reception, a visit to a gala performance at opera or theatre, or a banquet. Also, a good deal of unofficial discussion of problems, between whiles. Usually the Congress lasts four or five days, and is of great value in bringing members together for very concrete reasons, as well as for the simple personal reason of getting to know and understand the ways of thought and policy, as expressed in other countries than one's own. This sounds like a very leisurely programme, but in action it works out quite otherwise; so much occurs of an unlooked-for nature that the time never fails to pass very quickly—Paris, New York, Brussels, Berlin, Vienna, Oslo, Poland (Warsaw, Cracow), Holland (The Hague and Amsterdam), Budapest, Edinburgh, Dubrovnik, Buenos Aires; all have had Congresses as well, of course, as the initial one in London. If the P.E.N. can truly show itself to be mightier than the sword, what a fine achievement! Not that the Congresses were all honey and the handing of bouquets—far from it; there was always plenty of vigorous diversity of views, stormy hours, even. But that is surely as it should be, to keep atmosphere healthily ventilated. Fifty centres in thirty-five countries, with a membership of over four thousand—this seems to show the value of the idea. The underlying dangerous rock can be crystallized into one word, I think: Politics. No two writers probably hold exactly the same views on politics, and if this dangerous subject is to be allowed full sway, the healthily ventilated atmo-

sphere becomes the seat of a hurricane, and that way destruction lies. Said its President: "If the P.E.N. idea is looked on as a panacea for all evils, or even as a powerful preventive of international trouble, it is bound to disappoint and to furnish one more vanished illusion to a disillusioned world. Writers have no great, at least no direct influence on world affairs. Such influences as they exert are vague, and, as it were, subterranean; and they do well not to pretend to possess political power they have not. The P.E.N. should be a sort of guardian to Literature and its cousins, Painting and Sculpture, against chauvinistic and sectional demons. It should attempt to guarantee such breadth of mind towards Art generally as should render impossible in the future spiteful and muddyminded ostracism of this or that nation's art in times of conflict. In other words, the P.E.N. can educate the public opinion of the world to regard the achievements of art as supra-national, belonging to human nature as a whole, and supplying wants intellectual and emotional, which have nothing to do with material strife between nations. Nothing is more appalling in this world than the prejudice excited by ignorance; when fomented by the unscrupulous patriot it is the stuff of conflagration. If the P.E.N. can bring to the writers of the world, including the Press, a feeling that to pervert the truth about an enemy is as bad as to pervert it about a friend, it would have won half the battle of Peace."







#### IV. - GERMANY, EARLY AND LATE

GERMANY is difficult to write about, for the Germany I knew so intimately in my teens resembled so little the Germany of later years that I can hardly think of them as the same country. The earliest memories I have, then, will produce a "period" impression, but perhaps be valuable by way of contrast.

My first long visit was in the eighties, to Dresden, where my mother, brother, and I spent a winter, myself as private pupil, for piano playing, of Jean Louis Vicodé. Encouraged by an excellent grand piano, I worked hard for my master, but I do not think he was greatly interested, for he knew only too well that I should rightly have been in a low class at the Conservatorium, working my way up like the rest of the serious music-students. My mother would not consent to this, her argument being that I played nicely enough for an amateur, and that there was no question of my becoming a professional, ever. Yet, she approved of

the cachet implied by "pupil of Nicodé," for at that time he was headed for great renown as a teacher.

Our hotel was very close to the Zwinger, or National picture gallery, and Sunday mornings were always devoted to contemplation of them. It was then that my attitude of adoration for the Sistine Madonna became fixed for life, apparently. Very many years later I found that Himself, seeing it for the first time, and certainly in a period of rabid anti-Rafaelism, shared my view, which very much surprised me, for I had held my peace beforehand.

The Opera House was also quite close to the hotel, and we attended that on most evenings, almost as a matter of course. Fraulein Malten was then in her youth and in great beauty of voice; it was before Wagner had cast an eye on her; the tenor Gudehus, also then undiscovered by Wagner, was another of our stars; the baritone, Paul Buls, another. And still nearer the hotel was the Gewerbehaus, a small, unpretentious restaurant-hall, given over to beer and beef-steak and onions on most nights, and to the very finest symphony concerts on others. The King and Queen of Saxony and their suite occupied a boarded-off, roomy kind of pew in the corner of the hall on concert nights. It was there also that I heard Rubinstein play. When he reached in his programme Chopin's Fourth Ballade, I was all attention, as I was studying it at the time, and hoped to gain some interesting hints. But his attack was so bewildering and ferocious that I had some difficulty in following. So that when Nicodé, to my im-

mense pride and joy, came and sat with us during an interval and asked me how I was liking Rubinstein, I was obliged in honesty to say, "Not much!"

Dresden seemed to us at first a very plain, homely sort of city, for we had come from the slightly cosmopolitan elegance of Baden-baden and Wiesbaden. I have so many happy memories of both these places, but especially of Wiesbaden; such a genial, mellow, holiday-spirited spot it was long ago; with good walks, and rides, and drives, and concerts, and fêtes, and theatres; even the shops were specially attractive and more than German in their style.

In that long-ago year when the unveiling of the great monument on the Niederwald signalized to the world that Germany was united, and that she ruled the Rhine and a good deal added, westward, my mother and I were staying in some first-floor rooms on the handsome, garden-bordered Wilhelmstrasse. There was a tremendous gathering of royalties and notabilities at Wiesbaden, mostly staying at the Schloss with the old Kaiser. Before the start for the Niederwald, high above the Rhine, there was a long procession down the Wilhelmstrasse; it was a memorable show of nearly all Europe's crowned heads; representing Germany were the old Kaiser Wilhelm, Crown Prince Fritz, Prince Wilhelm (Kaiser of our time). Both Bismarck and Moltke were there; I was near enough to feel rather shuddery at the former's eyes, which bulged formidably. It was a very great occasion, and Wiesbaden looked gayer than ever, decorated with a great deal of taste and determination.

Another brilliant fête there marked the opening of the new opera house, but this was during "our Kaiser's" time. The intendant, appointed by the Kaiser, was a new man about whom little was then known—by name von Hülsen. A friend of mine, that gifted teacher of piano, Alice Clinton, then visiting Wiesbaden and about to return to London, had a great wish to see the inside of the beautiful new building, and hear, if possible, some of the items of the gala programme, then being rehearsed. We therefore, greatly daring, concocted a note to the lordly intendant, stating the facts, and at once received a permit for the dress rehearsal, which we attended with much pleasure. The voices in the nearly empty theatre sounded divine. The intendant, a tall, slender, graceful man very elegantly dressed, busied himself on the stage in a most practical way with lighting, scenery, and so forth. We felt most grateful for his kindness. What a startling end was hidden in the dim future for him—to fall dead at his Kaiser's feet, after an outstandingly fine *pas seul* as a—Colombine! He must have been too divinely tall if hardly divinely fair enough for the part, in a Colombine sense! I understand that this tragedy took place in Berlin, in the Eulenburg days. I have been told that von Hülsen was a very clever conjurer as well as a solo dancer. In the Wiesbaden days of which I speak the Kaiser sometimes honoured him by spending an evening at his villa, a "bier-abend," so-called in Germany.

Himself and I paid many very happy visits to Wies-

baden, though there is nothing to record about them except a general feeling of well-being, of relaxation, and mellowness. Walks, drives, rides, excursions into the Taunus mountains interspersed the working hours, and often we felt inclined to sit in the sunshine and do nothing, for it is not a stimulating climate.

The visit which we paid in autumn, 1913, was very different. An anti-English spirit manifested itself everywhere, and by bad luck we had chosen a sort of centre of militarism, for our hotel was also an Officers' Club. We had gone to Wiesbaden in the hope of curing a wrenched shoulder from which Himself had been suffering, and which was to give him trouble for some years to come. He had acquired it on Dartmoor, during a ride, in throwing open a heavy five-barred gate with his riding-crop. The gate responded only too readily, taking crop and shoulder more or less with it. Wiesbaden waters, so famed for this kind of cure, failed to relieve this case; it seemed that even the waters were anti-English. Seriously, many malicious things in a small way were done to harass and irritate, such as: If we ordered saddle horses for 2.30, none would appear; they might perhaps come at 3, when we had changed garments and gone our ways. Again, information was given us on a desired point in such a way as to be entirely misleading. All very petty, but, I fear, quite intentional. We took our meals in the restaurant of the hotel; at the very next table came an amiable Baroness speaking excellent English, and very friendly; we learned later on, during the War, that she

was a very well-known German secret service agent. In the next room, where table d'hôte went on, with a good sprinkling of uniforms among the guests, we heard, on the anniversary of Sedan, the noisy and vociferous toast: "Der Tag!" Much more serious than all this was the visit of a newspaper reporter, who, when Himself protested his ignorance of the German language and his inability therefore to give an interview, still persisted in talking and talking in German; he produced next day in his newspaper (a very important Frankfort one, read throughout Europe) an entirely imaginary interview of a terribly damaging and dangerous character. This was the last straw. After repudiation of the interview, which gave Himself a very great deal of trouble, we decided to leave, and without regret, a place changed to us beyond recognition. To the last minute the teasing and bad faith went on. Himself and I preferred to stroll on foot down the fine Wilhelmstrasse to the station, our luggage to come by hotel bus. The bus "lost its way," (!) arriving at the last possible minute. Even then we had not quite finished with the annoyances; I saw one piece of our hand luggage being abstracted and hidden behind a counter; but I did see it, and had it restored to its owners. Sad to have such nagging, niggling little memories after the golden times of former visits. It is true that there had always been a good deal of civic orderliness in Wiesbaden; I remember in the days of my youth being reprimanded several times by the police: for cantering down Wilhelmstrasse—though

there was a soft riding track for the rider's pleasure; for throwing a cigarette end (extinguished) from our balcony down into the street; for starting in the Kurgarten a private firework show of our own—rockets, Roman candles, etc.—some half-hour before the advertised hour of a public fête of the same kind in the same place! I must admit that this last reprimand was thoroughly deserved, but the joke was quite funny.

Another great occasion while we were staying at Wiesbaden, but like all the rest of the world, at Coblenz for the day, was the unveiling (by the ex-Kaiser) of a monument to his grandfather Wilhelm, at the junction of the Rhine and the Moselle. The Kaiser came by river, looking very much à la Lohengrin, in shining helmet if not armour, and it was a day of great ceremonial and of a long speech by him.

The Rhine, as a beauty river, has always left me rather cold. I know it well from Mannheim to Cologne, but always the banks seem to have a striped and bald appearance, due to vineyards, and the castles only moderately attractive, though finely placed. In general it suggests industry rather than romance, and I cannot help wondering at the amount of poetic feeling and writing outpoured on it. But one can think with whole-hearted enthusiasm of many an old German city, and whole districts—Weimar and the Thüringerwald, the Harz, the Taunus, Homburg, Heidelberg, Baden-baden, Nürnberg (with reservations, for it was changing rapidly when I last saw it). Munich is perhaps more changed than any of these since the long-ago



days when at the Hotel Bellevue (I can no longer put my finger on the exact spot it used to occupy) I saw for the first and last time Franz Liszt. I was sitting in the reading-room of the good old hotel when the door exactly facing me opened a little and that marvellous old head looked smilingly in and quietly withdrew. I was intensely excited, and not less so when I learned that the master was indeed staying at the hotel. The next day (at midday table d'hôte—no little tables in those days) Liszt sat at the head of the long table, his daughter Cosima, Siegfried Wagner, Eugen d'Albert, and Stavenhagen neighbouring him, so that my insignificant self was only about four seats from the fountain head. It was a joy to be there, if only to see how perfectly the master kept the ball of conversation rolling, how urbanely and easily he dominated. He must have already been about eighty years of age. The cause of this gathering was the first performance of the "Ring" as a cycle, at the Munich opera house. We saw two of the performances, but I fear I was already becoming a little tepid about Wagner's music; in any case, I do not remember any particular excellence or incident about either "Die Walküre" or "Götterdämmerung." I cherished hopes of meeting Liszt accidentally in the hotel and of expressing my homage, but the opportunity never came. He had one of the most striking and beautiful faces I have ever seen; certainly life had not soured him. Years later I reminded Stavenhagen of that sojourn in Munich, and he said it was a pity I had not succeeded in waylaying the master and saying

what I felt; that it was exactly the sort of thing that would have pleased him.

I can vouch for Munich being one of the most genial and attractive of cities in those days. It has changed enormously, but still seems to show traces of its past pleasantness, or did when Himself and I were last there in June, 1930. The Münchenerers seem to have traditional reputation for geniality to keep up, and it is no effort for them. Long ago I have seen a cabby offer his horse a slice of the black bread that he himself was eating, and a drink of the beer that he was drinking; I wonder how they express their innate brotherliness towards their taxis! In 1930 we would willingly have lingered on there; it was a brief visit, including a lecture to a crowded audience, and a catching of the night train to Berlin, *en route* for Poland, and a memorable P.E.N. Congress. Had sightseers though we were, we would gladly have taken a longer look at galleries and museums, heard an opera or two, enjoyed a Mozart opera in its ideal setting—the heavy gold frame of the little Residenz Theatre proscenium. And apart from all this is the feeling I always have in Munich of a lovely country lying to the south, of lakes and of mountains, a country we have never known, but which always calls me to wander in it.

In March, 1922, we paid a visit to Scandinavia; we did not mean it to be our last by any means, but so it proved to be.

Copenhagen gave us an impression, a very fleeting

one, of having been completely built at one and the same period, and that a good one for architecture. An animated dinner, some Press interviews, a conference on the possible founding of a Danish P.E.N., lunch at the British Embassy (a very fine palace), a lecture from Himself, a visit to the Thorwaldsen museum, and our time had slipped away. No chance to investigate the harbour or stroll through the streets, but we got the feeling that Copenhagen was a pleasant place to live in.

Thence to Göteborg, a city with specially close relations with England, we were told. There we stayed at the fine old stony and stately Residenz, guests of the hospitable Monsieur and Madame von Sydow. Newspaper reporters pursued Himself relentlessly to the lovely apartments allotted to us; after their departure I was horrified to see that priceless bits of china and of Copenhagen glass had been used as cigar-ash trays. Mercifully, nothing was broken nor cracked by the hot ash. The subsequent reporters were welcomed in the vestibule. We were taken out to lunch at a seaside resort; the quiet inlet or gulf was a mass of ice; there I saw the process of fishing through a hole in the ice and was duly thrilled, for I had thought it a picture only to be seen in Arctic regions. Again a lecture by Himself, preceded by a dinner party, which was more than a little torture to him, for his nervousness before lecturing was always extreme.

Immediately after the lecture we set forth for Stockholm. Such "sleepers" met our astonished eyes on that train: comfortable-sized square bedrooms, com-

municating, instead of the suffocating dens we are accustomed to in most other countries.

Stockholm was in its transition stage, between winter and spring; worn, trodden, and stale-looking snow was no addition to its undeniable beauty. Blocks of ice, almost without exception being used as a vehicle for tired or indolent sea-birds, were on the move in the waterways, going out to the Baltic. The city was a little difficult to focus owing to those same waterways, so that there did not seem to be a natural, inevitable centre to it. A visit to the University of Upsala occupied a whole day; we were very kindly chaperoned in our sightseeing by Dr. Söderblom, the progressive Archbishop of Sweden. He showed us some very fine church vestments, and at his house we heard most lovely singing—a male-voice choir, so perfect that I wept with joy. Back to Stockholm, arriving but little before eight, and a scurried change and a long drive out to dinner at the English Legation, put us in rather a fever, though we knew that our very kind host and hostess were aware of our visit to Upsala, and that trains are trains. Next day we lunched at the Royal Palace, and once more that atmosphere of the utmost kindness and cordiality prevailed. There was again a brilliantly and fully attended lecture from Himself.

Our send-off from Stockholm was something in the nature of a celebration; such a crowd of enthusiasts on the platform, and such hearty godspeed as I don't think I ever remember, before or since.

The journey to Oslo took the night and a little more;

we arrived at the British Legation at about 11.30 a.m., and there were welcomed by Sir Mansfeldt and Lady Finlay. Himself again lectured to a crowded and brilliant audience, with Dr. Nansen as chairman. We had met him in London once or twice previously, and he had cast a spell on us, as I think he did on most people. Next morning we were shown the Viking ships, which roused us both to the highest pitch of admiration—they do indeed breathe of gallant daring, enterprise, romance!

We left Oslo in the middle of that same day, travelling back direct towards North Germany, where we were surprised to find an air of starting life afresh, in spite of all the privations the people had been through, which had lasted till long after the War, of course. The train deposited us at Hamburg, and at once we found the air of new beginnings rather deceptive, for there was only one hotel open, and there was no disengaged room to be had in it. This was a grim prospect indeed for us, it being already 10.30 p.m. Wandering unhappily near the railway station, we were joined by an unattractive-looking individual who said he could guide us to the house of a friend of his who could give us a room for the night. Dubious as this sounded, our prospects were decidedly more dubious, and we meekly followed our guide. He took us to a first-floor apartment and left us to the care of a perfectly normal German *haus-frau*, who made ready a room for us, and next morning provided us with perfectly hot baths and a normal German breakfast of

coffee and rolls. The smooth working of events was explained by the fact that it was a small private pension. The proprietress was a little stiff at first with her ex-enemies, but we parted with great cordiality next morning after a long dissertation on the qualities of her little dog, of a breed unknown to us. A *Reh-hund* she called it—not that it in any way suggested hunting the stag; the little dog was very timid and hardly so large as a fox-terrier, but by careful thinking one could see some resemblance to a red deer in miniature—the plump tawny-red body without a crease anywhere, the too small head, with eyes glassy yet tender, and the very slender legs. It was rather a libel on any kind of deer, but doubtless of a most reputable and cherished race of dog. It is difficult to see what would have been our fate if we had cold-shouldered the shabbily dressed dubious-looking man, who might easily have been luring us to our doom instead of proving, as he certainly did, our guardian angel. A walk about all night, probably—and yet—no, not even that luxury, for we were impeded by luggage! In any case, the railway station was locked up till the first morning train.





## V.—ITALY, SOUTHWARD

ITALY is not a great country for walkers; forbidding high walls close in dusty or dirty roads leading out of every city or even village, all view of the landscape to right and left is, as a rule, shut out. Moreover, one feels that most Italians despise the traveller on foot as a person who cannot afford to travel in a carriage; they turn contemptuous, or, at best, pitying eyes on the simply clad pedestrian wearing inelegant boots, not even yellow; and if the hiker by great luck finds some grassy knoll or hollow inviting him to rest and refreshment, so much the worse; he loses caste still further in Italian eyes that pass by. Mother Earth is not a suitable place to recline if you can afford any kind of vehicle, even if drawn by a sore-backed, lame, and overburdened bit of horseflesh. This attitude is by no means so marked in the mountains, luckily, for mountain folk are more or less of one family, wherever found. In Valtournanche, for instance, off the Val d'Aosta, one saw little or none of this scornful attitude towards the pedestrian. From Chatillon we had a few



good walks. Going up to Breuil, at the back of the Matterhorn (and what a terrible come-down from the front, or Swiss façade!), we made off eastward one day in search of adventure, but with no great satisfaction. After a time Himself went forward to explore, and I remember how very desolate I felt, left watching him become smaller and smaller and finally disappear completely. He returned by the same stony-hearted route, not having found anything likely to amuse us, and we set forth, along a high hillside, towards home, which was Chatillon for the time being. Coming to a puzzling choice of routes, Himself went forward again to investigate, and this time it was quite half an hour before we rejoined forces. I had stayed almost exactly where he left me, as arranged, but he had returned on a higher or lower level, without being aware of it, and quite hidden from me. It was grassy everywhere, and there was a brisk wind, so that footsteps were inaudible. He shouted; the wind was not "my way." He then, having, as he thought, investigated the near country, made off down a very steep hillside. By the end of half an hour he suddenly reappeared. We were both of us in rather an agitated state and very glad to fling ourselves down by a bubbling streamlet, bathe hot faces and hands, lie out in the kindly sunshine, and regain tranquillity.

Leaving Chatillon and its rather chastening inn, we journeyed along the Val d'Aosta to Courmayeur. There were good walks, but also the irritation of the village being about a mile short of a view of Mont

Blanc. However, when we did get the view, it was a good one; no look of a back door about it. One walk, up Mont de la Saxe, we sought to make more interesting by going up direct instead of by the path; the gradient was very steep, and we had frequently to progress crab-wise with the side of the feet, for lack of foothold; and the short grass, very slippery, provided incident and interest enough in a small way. Being very thirsty on arriving at the top, and seeing a flock of goats with herd, we took our first drink of goats' milk; it was swallowed "wi' deeficulty." On another walk we investigated the annoying little hill which so jealously rears itself between Courmayeur and Mont Blanc. On our way along its side Himself, for the moment somewhat above me, dislodged a rock, which came hurtling down my way. I had only time to leap high and quite blindly; the rock, fortunately very close to the ground just then, bounded off again downhill.

At Macugnaga, too near under Monte Rosa, we did nevertheless have one wonderful glimpse of that peak. It was a night of black-blue sky, racing clouds, glittering stars; and the mountain took on extraordinary life and beauty, looking as if it were capable of breathing and moving. I gave, too, a sympathetic glance at the Cima di Jazzi, the summit of which is overhung with a cornice of deep snow. That was the scene of a little shock for Leslie Stephen, who, having arrived at the summit, took his ease and struck his alpenstock into the snow. Presently drawing it out again he was more

than a little surprised to find himself surveying the village of Macugnaga through the clear hole it had made. The Cima's "Cornica" is a notable one, and he had lighted on it. One more very lovely vision we had of Monte Rosa, from the Col di Colmar, a walk we took from Orta. It was from Orta, too, that we ascended Motterone, discussing in lively fashion the work of George Meredith, just then bulking large in everyone's reading. I think "Diana of the Crossways" was, on the whole, the most read of his novels at that time; in it there is a Motterone scene. And oh! the purple figs of Orta! I don't think we had had quite enough of them ever before; they were magnificent and pervaded the whole place.

Being at Levanto on the Italian Riviera for a fairly long stay, we discovered many good walks. Mornings were devoted to writing—Himself putting the finishing touches to "The Man of Property," and I following after with the typing of the whole novel; afternoons were given to exploring the country. And very pleasant we found it, giving us about thirty different routes, though I must confess that most of them were reached only by starting out on the same tiresome bit of level suburb and road about a mile and a half in length. This very great bore was somewhat mitigated by the sight of several peasant women standing in their doorways, spinning; the thread growing evenly under their fingers, the spindle dangling. I have reason to remember the Levanto walks, for in my spare moments from typing the novel, I compiled a guidebook. Its

pages were typed by me, the illustrations were snapshots taken either by me or by a friend; it was bound in elementary but sturdy fashion in the splendid Italian sailcloth which one finds in the shops hereabouts (and especially at Spezia)—the real stuff of sails. The cover was decorated by stitchery, and it was eventually presented to the hotel. There was then (1905) no guide book to be had of the district, so that I felt rather pleased with my effort. North and south along the coast there were enchanting ways, northward especially. We delighted in one cliff topped with splendid pines, the deep blue sea showing between their great iridescent trunks. This high plateau we called "Greek" for short, knowing very well what we meant though never having visited Greece. The atmosphere of "The Bacchæ" of Euripides was here; dangerously sweet, wild, thyme-scented and pine-scented; solitary, sun-flecked, mysterious. We longed to be there when the whole wild throng would sweep by, with clashing of cymbals, song, thudding of hooves and feet, wild-eyed, whirling; we were not prepared, however, to suffer the fate of the uninitiated, watching unbidden, and have an arm or leg torn off in some frenzied ecstasy, to be brandished as wave-offering to the bacchanalian deity, by his devotees.

In Italy the further south one goes the less natural it seems to indulge in walking, though we did some strolling around Sorrento and Amalfi. In Sicily the ruling passion laid hold of us once more; at Girgenti, Taormina, Syracuse we set out hopefully but usually

returned without great satisfaction from many a walk. The never ending walls, the eternal rough rocky roads, with no possibility of striking out across country, soon curbed our efforts. At Palermo it was much the same; in any case I should not have been able to explore the neighbourhood, for I was laid up for the whole week or ten days of our visit there. The most I was capable of was the noting down in my little travelling tune-book, of some rather unusual and striking melodies as played by the daily piano-organs which haunted the street under my bedroom window.

We stayed also at Taormina, at Syracuse, at Girgenti, and the best of these was Taormina. At the old monastery-hotel we had a noble room, with large stone-flagged outdoor room attached, and with a superb outlook on Etna. Nothing could have been better, for a writer. And when we strolled, it was liable to be to the Greek theatre, and there again—we looked at Etna undisturbed, even though we were told that the theatre was Late and Bad and Græco-Roman. There were some real country walks too, pretty enough. But we were peeved that nobody would listen to our proposal to take us up Etna—the snow was too deep, the volcano was too active, no one knew the way, etc., etc.

At Syracuse, where we had landed on our way from Egypt, we could have been happy but for the mosquitoes. I have never known such voracious ones; they came from the quarries, where after the battle of Syracuse, countless Greek prisoners had languished and died, but the race of mosquitoes had thriven on it all,

and were vicious beyond reason, as one might expect. Expeditions were arranged after dinner every evening to our room, and some forty insects would be slain before we attempted to retire; that made but small inroads on the hordes remaining. Carefully tucked-in net curtains they simply laughed at, and life became burdensome. We retired, defeated, to Girgenti, and there, in a simple but good hotel, we were at peace. No mosquitoes at all, and a pleasant nearness to the Greek temple ruins. Sometimes we walked, sometimes drove, but the temples usually came into the programme, whatever the original intention might be. They are very fine, overwhelming, and finely placed in the landscape, and yet—the temple of Neptune at Pæstum has something beyond all this, of majesty, of aloofness; the fumes of incense seem almost to cling about it still. There is not quite that feeling about the Girgenti temples. That which we liked best was the smallest fragment of all; two columns and a small bit of frieze of the Temple of Castor and Pollux.

As one walks up into the town of Girgenti one becomes conscious of a soil oozing sulphur; probably the great sulphur mine runs this way underground. At the railway station were many trucks loaded with the sharp clean yellow bricks of sulphur. Miners of it are credited with being a rough, dangerous crew; who wouldn't be, working in such an atmosphere? I, for one, would choke and die in less than a day, I believe. All the same Segesta, which also has temples, was not considered a good place to go to even though we were

there within hail; Sicilians are apt to turn into brigands occasionally, and had been so doing just before we arrived; we didn't see the connection between that fact and the sulphur miners of Girgenti, but there was one, no doubt. It was all very intricate, and we were not encouraged to visit Segesta.

Of Capri, another southerly island, I have very little to record. We were there before the great vogue, but still felt it rather crowded and unrestful for a writer. Revisions of "The Man of Property" were going on, perhaps it was a time of edged nerves. One night, between eleven and twelve we were awakened from sleep by the cry of "Fire!" and the sound of racing feet along the corridor. We did our best to cope, and hastily put a few things into a small suitcase and dressing case. Going to the head of the stairs we felt enough in command of the situation to stay there and await developments. There were none, and after perhaps twenty minutes we went back to our room, having learnt that all was well. We were much amused to see what we had *not* packed: Himself's quite irreplaceable MSS. of the novel, the only one existing copy, of course, and an equally irreplaceable family heirloom, a beautiful old "repeater" watch, still reposing under Himself's pillow. Leaning out of the window for fresh air, for our room had a sickly smell of burning, we saw some curtains, still smouldering, tossed out of the window immediately below ours; and they lay in a narrow alley, fuming to heaven. So we had been somewhat in the fire light, and there was cause for the

unpleasant smell of burning. One day when we had driven up to Anacapri, our little carriage stopped at a house where the view was very fine, it was said. We stepped indoors and through the house; with our backs to the room, we prepared to enjoy the landscape. Suddenly, without the slightest warning (and Himself had a very bad headache) a most terrific din burst forth behind us. All the gear for a lively Tarantella had been most silently assembled, and they had taken us in the rear. But Himself was never to be undermined by such tactics; tossing some money down he simply walked out, and got into the little carriage; we returned with some doggedness to Capri. How different from the first Tarantella I ever saw—also, oddly enough, at Capri. It was well notified beforehand, the dancers came decorously to the hotel, and performed after dinner. At that time I had certainly never seen any folk dancing; it was long before the various revivals, and I was still a school girl to whom Tarantella meant a piece of music, to which there should be a dance attached, as in the case of a polka. Now I was simply in ecstasy by the time the whirling, graceful, noisy, compelling affair finished. I crept off up to my room while the dancers were resting, and was discovered by my mother, about to descend again, with my two only and beloved bracelets with which I intended to say my thanks to the women dancers. My diplomatic mother pointed out to me that as there were four women dancers and I had but two bracelets, my gifts would probably lead to bloodshed downstairs. So that



was that; I had to contain my gratitude, and simmer with excitement for a long time afterwards. There were very evident traces of the "Greek" slave type of beauty among the Capri girls at that time; I can remember some half dozen girls of quite exceptionally lovely features, and that not of Italianate type. Two at least of these young beauties would accompany me wherever I went, and as like as not, a very small brother, quite naked, would stroll in front, making sweet sounds from a reedy flute, or rather, two reed flutes, one at each corner of his mouth. My appearance must have sadly damaged the idyllic picture; luckily I never thought about that; we were all very unself-conscious and friendly together, and I don't at all remember what sort of clothes I wore; but more gentle than simple, I fear, and it was the Victorian era!

One more memory of a rather idyllic kind connected with Capri, but long afterwards, comes to my mind. The Conrads were staying in Capri at the time when Himself and I were bound for Amalfi. We called on them *en route*, and very soon they felt they would like to return the call. So they put forth from their enchanted isle by rowboat with four guaranteed oarsmen. About lunch time we saw them approaching Amalfi harbour, Conrad standing at the prow and directing his slaves, who kept perfect time for the run-in. I hastily wondered if Scylla and Charybdis were anywhere hereabouts, but could see only Jessie Conrad and a small boy in the stern. It appeared they had been coming on steadily during four hours, and it was out of the

question to expect those guaranteed oarsmen to make the journey back the same day; moreover, the sea was no longer so calm as when they had set forth. So we had the pleasure of their company till next day—they entirely without luggage; we, going lightly-luggaged ourselves, did the best we could for the family of three. In the evening we four elders were sitting chatting in the public room of the monastery-hotel when a very small flying figure, most extravagantly over-pyjamed, appeared; he wanted a h-h-handkerchief, he said, and it was only afterwards that he confessed to being terrified by the alleged movements of his mother's greatcoat hung on his bedroom door. He did not go back to that room, moreover, until his parents retired, and were in a position to control the movements of errant overcoats.

One day we walked up from Amalfi to Ravello, that melancholy little city on a hill; its half-dead appearance was very quenching to our spirits, and though we could see that the famous mosaics were Early and Fine, we were glad to get away again, bad sightseers that we were. Now, Pæstum was different: first there was a drive behind a fiery little pair of black Sicilian horses, to Salerno, then a railway journey through lands which did produce lovely clumps of jonquils and very sweet strangely red-purple violets, if nothing else; then the temples in utter aloofness near the sea, the chief one not even showing that it was a roofless ruin until one came near. . . .

At Sorrento Himself suffered a disaster. Sitting out

on a blazingly sunny terrace, floored with black and white marble squares, and writing steadily, he acquired sunstroke. Temperature ran high and he had a terrible headache. We felt it best to move over to Naples, where medical help would be more likely found. I had, however, a considerable hunt before discovering a doctor who spoke English. When we were able to move at all from Naples a decision was taken to get out of Italy into a more nerve-resting atmosphere, and we went north as speedily as was possible. Never can I forget the peace of our first night in Tirol; in spite of an unpromising start, for all the Bozen hotels were full and we were fain to settle in at the Kurhaus at Gries, a suburb across the river. In a quiet garden-facing room, of a dewy night in late April, one's spirit expanded; one thanked the great luminous stars, and I could have kissed the earth in my gratitude. From there we went up to Mendelpass and made a very quiet stay of six weeks, during which time it hardly ceased raining. As a nerve-soother, I have always believed there could have been no better weather or treatment; gradually headaches disappeared and nerves regained tranquillity, with no sun at all to remind them of the pernicious past, in South Italy.



## VI.—NORTH AFRICA, FROM EAST TO WEST

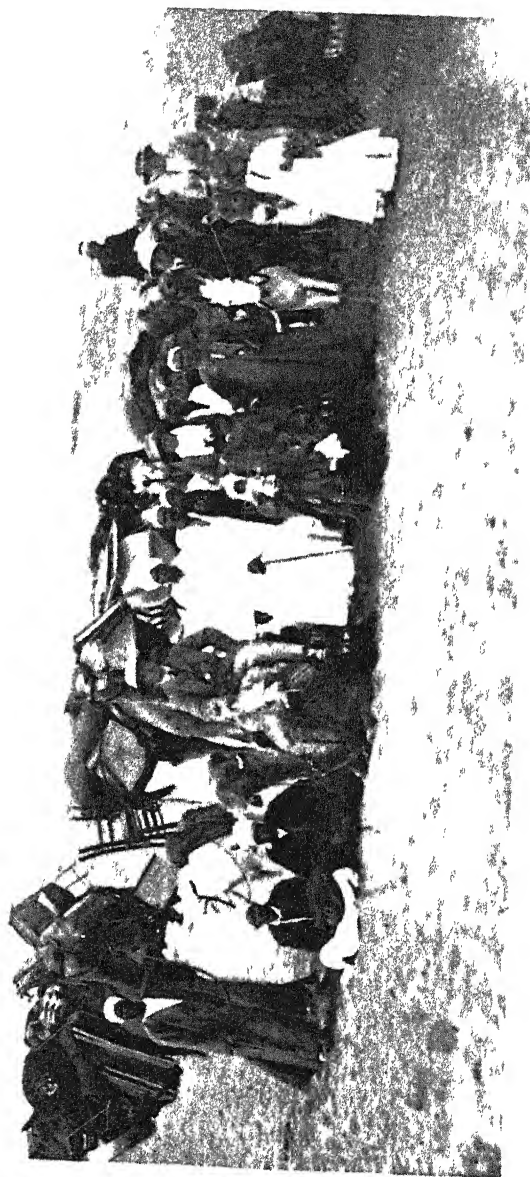
GIVEN our incurable aversion from sightseeing, Egypt seems a strange choice to have made for our winter quarters in 1913-1914. But we were in great need of sunshine and warmth, and thought it the safest of climates. For those reasons, therefore, we settled ourselves at the gorgeous hotel at Heliopolis, whence the sun was visible from morning till night; and we made our several visits to Cairo for definite reasons only: the museum, the bazaar, a mosque, a lunch engagement. I remember that we lunched with Lord Kitchener at the British Agency on the day when he made his first aeroplane flight; there was already daily flying at Heliopolis. Having heard that K. of K. did not suffer fools gladly, I was in a state of great terror by the time lunch began and I found myself beside him. He was, however, very kindly, and even affable in conversation; probably the prospect of the coming afternoon's joy-ride mellowed him and made him tolerant.

During a trip we made into the desert with men, camels, and donkeys the different effects produced by planes passing for the first time over our cortège was rather curious. Most of our men looked uncomfortable, as if they thought something would certainly fall on them; donkeys, even more disturbed, reared violently, showing great signs of alarm; camels took no notice whatever. The planes were flying fairly high, but, of course, making their characteristic sound, then not so familiar to man and beast as it is nowadays.

It was in the Egyptian desert that I learned how pleasant and how gentle a companion a camel can be, and we came to the conclusion that Daisy Bell, my first camel friend, with whom I spent twelve memorable days of wandering, was the undoubted queen of camels. She was a racing camel, and stood no nonsense from the humbler members of her kind in our cortège, which included eight baggage camels, three donkeys, and fifteen attendant men and boys, engaged for our desert jaunt. She was of a most lovely tawny rose colour, with none of those distressing dark blemishes and mended patches that mar the hide of the humbler baggage camel. On the Prophet's birthday, which occurred while we were cruising about with our ships of the desert, races and competitions were arranged, with prizes for the men and boys. The camel race was a fine sight, the beasts tearing along with their riders, all small boys, standing on the saddles, silhouetted against the sky. The boys, braced in some mysterious way, like circus riders, were all shouting excitedly.

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WANDERING IN THE DESERT EGYPT

Daisy was so easily the winner that I felt she ought to have been labelled "Hors concours." Still, there was one other young riding camel who showed a good turn of speed. Daisy's special attendant, a very ugly child and the smallest of all our crew, usually followed Daisy and me on foot; when the spirit moved him he would swing idly on her tail; she never seemed even to notice it. Indeed, to demonstrate how devoted she was to this imp, a little scene was once staged for our benefit. One of the men caught up the boy and pretended to spank him, the boy's voice being raised in (faked) screams. Daisy, dining from a dry meal spread in my rubber travelling bath (I may say stranger things than that happen in desert travel), raised her head, stared fixedly, ceased munching, then forthwith started at a canter for the scene of action, to protect her lambkin. The Prophet's birthday was marked also by a great feast for the men; a ram which had appeared from nowhere in particular being discreetly slaughtered "off" and consumed, body, bones, and "beak." One evening, having arrived at the edge of the Fayum oasis, we sent in for a dancer. She arrived, with a goodly company of her friends, and in the intervals of enjoying a vast number of cigarettes and chocolates there was dancing. The chief dancer was really beautiful; she had long, rather glittering clear green eyes with very dark lashes, a straight, shapely nose, wide mouth, and splendid teeth; through the nose (between the nostrils) hung a chased and pierced golden crescent, the points turned upward. Above the waist she wore a flesh-coloured



thin silk singlet (and this, I guessed, was in deference to the alleged prudery of the English); below was a very full black dull silk skirt, gold-sequined à la Sumurun. Her dancing was good, but I think not remarkable; her acrobatic and balancing feats were much more striking. Late in the evening she made a little tour of her audience, perching first on Himself's knee, then on mine. I hope we behaved quite suitably. But she told our dragoman, who told us some days afterwards, that there was nothing to be done with those two—"They're in love with each other!" However, even under this very disappointing state of things, next morning the whole troupe turned out on our departure and gave us a clamorous and very friendly farewell. On less hectic evenings in our desert jaunt we always had some sort of entertainment after dinner; our men had been chosen with an eye to their small gifts of singing and so forth. Some had quite good voices, some danced to the rhythmic clapping of hands and beating of sticks on the ground. One evening, all the men being ranged round the inside of the big tent, and moving rhythmically to a chant of their own, a young baggage camel man fell to the ground and lay there, rigid and apparently unconscious. His neighbours took him by the ankles and shoulders, swished him out of the tent into the cool, starry night, and returned to their chant and rhythmical movements as if nothing at all had happened. It seemed foolish to make a fuss when everyone was so completely unperturbed, but I took care to note next morning that the

young camel-driver was looking exactly the same as usual at camel-loading time. Sometimes the men would dramatize the day's events, seen with a comic or satiric eye; one of them was a lyrical poet and would improvise on any given subject—his camel, his love, his present employers! Yes, desert days were very glamorous: breakfast in the big tent; coffee, piles of very good toast, a heap of boiled eggs (I, who had never before in my life departed from toast and coffee, found myself eating five eggs; it is true they were but the size of greengages.) Then Himself and I would go for a constitutional, and it was often very far to go to find a little sheltered nook out of sight of the camp. Still, it was just as well to persevere, for one morning, as we stood idly waiting, ready to start out for the daily trek, I remember our dragoman handing the field-glasses to Himself with a whimsical smile and saying, "That is cook!" of a far-distant crouching figure!

By nine o'clock we riders were starting, and by about 9.30 the loaded camels had come along. A halt was made for a picnic lunch. For the afternoon journey the baggage went ahead, so that when we others arrived tents were already up, bath water heating in readiness for the daily tub. One day an old flute-player on his donkey joined us as we jogged along; he was on his way from one wedding festivity to another, and he played us many a gay little tune. Those tunes were always small, neat, very definitely shaped, and very childish, quite different from the alleged Moor-inspired laments that one hears in Southern Spain, those tragic

downward-trailing phrases of despair. One day a real pageant passed by at no great distance—some Bedouin chief of a large-scale clan moving to pastures new, one supposed. Great flocks of sheep, goats, camels, hundreds of gaily-dressed followers riding and afoot, fine horses, the harem, hidden in little opaque cages on camel-back, the whole accompanied by gay music of flutes, drums, and bagpipes. They took no notice whatever of us. Another day we passed at a greater distance a group of less happy-looking desert wanderers; the men had dropped on to one knee and all had their guns at the "ready." I asked our dragoman if they really would fire on us; he said it would be well not to go any nearer.

During our wanderings in the desert we came on the Roman city of Crocodilopolis, which was just then being intensively excavated. We climbed the sudden hill, but found such a gritty, unpleasant wind blowing up there that we were not much the wiser for our climb; there was a perfect dust-screen. Then came lunchtime, and our dragoman asked if we would prefer to lunch in the hotel nearby. In spite of the dusty wind, we thought we could find a sheltered spot for lunch, so we said that the usual picnic would please us better. To which he replied: "I am glad, for that hotel is full of *bags*." It took quite a few minutes before I realized that the vowel intended was a "u," not an "a." So much for pronunciation; our dragoman's English in general was quite good. Another occasion I remember when "the little more and how

much it is" nearly brought me to mirth. A noble and ceremonious young Arab came to call on us at one of our desert camps, soon after the setting up of the tents towards sunset. Talking of Arab horses in general, and doing my best to relieve the rather heavy going, I asked him if it was true that bay was the best-liked colour in Arab horses. To which he replied: "Yes, it is, but my own favourite horse is green." After-reflection taught me that he probably meant *gris*—i.e., French for grey—but it was a tense moment for me, because so very unexpected. At sight of a long, long lake at the edge of the Fayum oasis our men raced off to wash themselves and their clothes, a perfectly natural proceeding for desert folk, but which surprised me—it was such a passionate departure, as if nothing on earth could keep them from that water.

We saw a mirage or two. I was rather disappointed to see the same picture at least twice; I feared it was due to a poor imagination on my part. The image was of two rounded high headlands and between them a lively, moving blue sea, the waves not white-capped, but running briskly in.

Not far from the lake to which our camel-men fled with such ardour we came on a pack of hounds being exercised, another surprise. Almost automatically I was in the middle of them, and, being on foot for the moment, prepared thoroughly to enjoy their company. The Master, however, shouted, "Please don't touch them; some of them have eczema!" which rather damped my pleasure.

At Sakkara, which came our way both on the outward and homeward journeys, Himself and I clambered to the top of the Brick Pyramid, little thinking that it had not been excavated, or of the treasures hidden under our feet. Among the rather crumbly bricks I found several small pots and some very small saucers, but I know not whether they were ancient or modern. Our visit to Egypt was pre-Tutankamen and, of course, still more pre-Sakkara.

Our last place of call on the way from the desert to Mena House was the tomb of a king. Outside the entrance to it lay a human skull, at which I gazed dubiously, for to me it suggested some recent tragedy of the desert. One passes so many camel carcasses and no doubt gets into the way of emphasizing the cruelties of travel, both for man and beast, in the desert. No such qualms stirred in the hearts of the tourist party next to arrive after us. When we appeared in the vestibule of Mena House, our desert jaunt being over, that same skull was reposing on the concierge's desk, instructions stuck on it. "Yes, ma'am, American lady mean to pack it!" said the concierge. *Souvenir d'Egypte!*

My parting from Daisy Bell was quite affecting. She, being "down" in that curiously small space occupied by the camel couchant, put up her face in such unmistakable affection that I had no choice but to plant a kiss on her velvet nose, and that without repulsion, for she had no low camel habit of regurgitation.

Luxor is, without doubt, the high-light of travel in

Egypt. The early mornings there were exquisite; from our windows looking over the Nile a very delicately coloured picture of clear green water and silvery sandy shore shimmered as in a vision; even the early tourists moving about on the far strand took on the look of Bible characters—the children of Israel safe across the Jordan, say. I don't know why it should have looked so blest and holy; Egypt is certainly not the country to suggest such visions or thoughts. Day after day we made the orthodox excursions, and although it was pre-Tutenkamen, being early in 1914, we found plenty to engage our attention. Alongside the overwhelming impression of Karnak we liked to set the tremendous pleasure and verve of Medina Habou. We learned later on that this latter was not a place of religion in the usual sense, but more in the nature of a triumphant commemoration of a great military victory. Sunbaked and full of sunshine, of wild bees, and of an unrestrained feeling for joy and life, it made a very different impression from, say, Luxor temple, where one sidled timidly into a dark, inner little chamber, to find a dimly seen menacing statue of Sekket striding towards one as if demanding that list of one's sins and threatening dire punishment. One defect in Luxor as a resort, as on all cultivated land in Egypt, is the snuff-coloured, snuff-scented dust which covers face and clothes with a golden-brown powder so fine that it is difficult to remove, and leaves a queer scent in one's clothes for long afterwards. I thought perhaps that bones of the long ago played their part in this peculiar product—

bones mixed with very bright brown rich earth; I have met nothing like it anywhere else in the world. Assouan, being on rock, is free from this defect, but we do not get off altogether, for it has an all pervading graveyard with graves none too deeply dug. Through this cemetery it seems necessary to pass to get started on any and every excursion. These graveyards are a feature in North Africa; from Egypt to Morocco they appear to serve as a place of pious pilgrimage, especially for the women folk, who sit and chat very contentedly on the graves by way of pleasure on their one day's outing in the week—Friday (that is, the Moslem Sunday). At Assouan I came across an original, though an unsuccessful, method of begging. A tall, ragged young man of impudent demeanour had been pestering me for some time on my way to a telegraph office. When I was queued up for the required *guichet*, he had a better chance than ever, and I a better chance of showing my obstinacy. At last he said, "I am sorry, lady, you are so very poor!" and stalked away.

The start of our trek from Tunisia to the Mediterranean was a quiet crossing from Palermo to Tunis. I contrived to stay on deck until we reached Trapani, curious to see the spot where Samuel Butler declares, more or less in earnest, the *Odyssey* was written by some young bluestocking of antiquity. After noting that the scene corresponded fairly to his theory I retired gratefully to my bed, and slept.

Along the huge lagoon-like waterway that leads to

Tunis we watched lovely flights of flamingos against the morning sky; and landed about eight o'clock.

A thrill was given to those of our party who had their first sight of graceful, dignified, white-clad Arab men; a less pleasant thrill was given to all of us at sight of the first woman, for in Tunis the decorous woman wears a very thick very black oblong of what looks like opaque material over her face. This has a ghastly effect, surrounded as it is by white draperies; one could not help wondering what fell disease lay behind, until one saw that every woman was thus hidden away behind the very black face-screens. In the country, on the contrary, the Bedouin women go quite unveiled; they wear a simple garment of dark blue wool with splashes of crimson about it; gold coins are worn as a necklace, and the whole effect is admirable. They are usually good-looking, with high cheekbones and splendid teeth and eyes. They greeted us as we motored by, in a frank, friendly, rather boyish fashion. We passed a good many of them on our way to Kairouan, that large, busy, self-centred city, not at all concerned with the traveller, but with a very intense life of its own, lying one hundred miles south of Tunis. There we saw the Great Mosque, to which anyone has access since the French desecrated it in Moslem eyes by setting foot in it. One may also visit other mosques, so I imagine that the whole city, once counting as very holy, has quite lost caste. It is well worth a visit, however, and in its palmy days I doubt if one would have been able to roam about it at will. On the way back,



more Bedouin women, in small groups, gossiping at some wayside well; very attractive they looked in their blue, red, and gold garb, and frank, boyish faces. I wonder if they are any less moral than the heavily-masked townswomen slipping along close to walls, and apparently anxious to be neither seen nor heard. Furtive and timid they look in Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco. The nomadic life seems to have its advantages, not to speak of the delights of free movement, and free breathing.

We visited Carthage, of course, and found it more than usually difficult mentally to rebuild the ancient city. I don't at all know why. Not even the offer of a most reasonably-priced villa, with entirely unexcavated garden, stirred our sluggish souls. Perhaps it was that Sidi Bou Said, taken on our way there, had captured all our enthusiasm. That charming, smiling village seemed almost too good to be true; one could imagine oneself settled there, contented and happy, for ever in the sunshine, with the deep blue sea far below.

The souk at Tunis is one of the very finest and most complete; it was the first souk or bazaar that we had seen, except that in Cairo, where we were always shepherded by our dragoman. In Tunis we were free of a dragoman, and found it hard to resist buying indiscriminately, so gay and attractive were the wares. We also visited the palace of the Bey, and a fine library housed in a monastery at the edge of the city. The monastery was in being, so that I was not permitted to go everywhere, even to see books. I was well

pleased, however, to be left in the main library, the appearance of which, oddly enough, has a faint echo in the much smaller library at Kenwood, Hampstead!

Our next halt after Tunis was at Constantine. It is a fine romantic-looking city, with the makings of a theatre drop-scene about its gorge. There was an icy wind blowing, and both Himself and I felt that we should be better advised to stay indoors, having colds; as he was much the more afflicted of the two, his room was placed several doors away from the rest of our party of four. My room was at a corner of the hotel, the ground sloping precipitously below my window. For these various reasons I was the one to register most thoroughly the six little earthquakes that took place during the twenty-four hours of our stay. Or rather, all but the first, which was evidently taking place as we were in the act of driving up to the hotel and alighting. The natural shaking due to the bounding hotel motor-bus made us unaware of anything untoward, but there was certainly some agitation visible in the square hall of the hotel, for which we only accounted to ourselves afterwards. The four following tremors were very slight, though one heard a half-hearted squeal or two and pattering of feet along corridors. The sixth was just a little more pronounced; and I, knowing that one of our party was taking a bath, for our bathroom was next my room, stepped to the door and called: "You're not scared?" and a cheerful voice answered from the depths: "Why should I be?" So, it is clear that the six little quakes by no means equalled in effect that one

big one, of very long ago, on the Riviera, of which I have already spoken. But let me tell of my one unforgettable sight at Constantine. Spending most of my dull day at the window, cursing my cold and the icy wind, I saw, well to the right, a *fordouk* or stable—the usual open square, surrounded by roofed stalls in which camels or donkeys and their men may rest when on the road. This one was now occupied by camels, and in the middle of the courtyard were two courting camels. It is impossible to go into much detail, but I can never forget the exquisite tenderness with which the unwieldy fellow, with his incredibly clumsy hoof, pawed his love's shoulder, nor the answering tenderness and refinement with which she turned her young head over her shoulder, to gaze into his eyes. Well as I have always thought of camels, I have thought still better of them since this entirely unrehearsed little scene, so impossible to put into words, but idyllic. After a time, a camel-driver came forth from somewhere, gently beat the lover off his still-couched love, and the whole train emerged from the *fordouk*, to take up their loads elsewhere and start the long trail out or homeward.

From Constantine we travelled on to Algiers, into which we did not fit very well, for some unknown reason; or perhaps I had better admit at once that I believe the chief reason was that we felt we had chosen the wrong hotel, a low-brow cause indeed. We had no intention of staying long there in any case, and soon trekked south, a thirty-hour journey to Beni Ounif,

very near the edge of the Sahara. There we stayed much longer than we had intended; it was so strange and unusual a spot. The hotel was run by an energetic Marseillais and his wife, with some underlings; the cooking was excellent and undertaken by the husband; it was a matter of real pride to him. They made us very comfortable in this Bureau Arab, which had become one of the Hotels Transatlantiques which stud North Africa, and are invaluable to the traveller. Beni Ounif proved itself a wonderful place for a writer; work went on apace. In the afternoons a game of tennis with the officers of the French garrison, or a walk, or a drive filled the time. Then came the great moment of the day—a run up to the hotel roof for the most marvellous sunsets that we had ever seen. Day after day without fail came the flaming pageant, and one hardly knew in which quarter of the heavens lay the greatest enchantment. The blood-red sky, with black Pyramids silhouetted against it, as seen almost daily from Heliopolis in Egypt, seemed lacking in subtlety and variety, compared with these Sahara sunsets.

Just at the entrance to the six or seven villages known collectively as Figuig (just into Morocco, and containing great wealth in its three hundred thousand palm trees) we came to a group of rocks, which, on inspection, showed low reliefs of animals—baboon, elephant, camel, giraffe, pig, ram. This seemed an exciting find, but we could not learn anything of their history either on the spot or later in London, when we submitted some very faithful copies for the inspection

of the suitable officials at the British Museum. No one had any theory as to their history or age; all we could surmise was that the work had probably been done by some visiting craftsmen from further south, for neither elephant, giraffe, nor baboon belong to this part of Africa, the climate not being warm enough to sustain them in comfort—that is, the climate of today.

On one occasion in the village at Beni Ounif we saw a camel caravan being loaded, and eventually started for Timbuctoo. This was thrilling—the genuine thing! Timbuctoo in real life!

Evenings at Beni Ounif were brimful of amusement and hilarity, quite the opposite to one's usual experience of hotel evenings in more orthodox surroundings. Dinner ended, we went forth into a marvellous night of low-hung stars, shuffled our way back through softest, palest, silvery sandy ways to my bedroom, very small, but containing the only fireplace in the whole building. Clustered around the cheerful big fire, for desert nights can be very briskly cold, we settled in to listen to Himself read aloud "The Pickwick Papers." He was a superb reader-aloud, and when he knew by heart his subject, and loved it as he did Pickwick, it was a truly perfect performance and one not to miss. Sounds of such unrestrained hilarity floated out from the tiny room, that in the end other guests were fain to ask the recipe for our unfailing joy o' nights. And this was a little awkward to explain; it seemed so churlish not to invite them to share our pleasure, but the room,

so tiny, would have been overcrowded and rendered uninhabitable for sleeping purposes if we had indulged in a general hospitality during those evenings.

We took train back for thirty hours northward, and came to Oran, a city we rather liked, and outside which we found once again a few wild flowers, the lack of which had been severely felt down there on the Sahara edge. Thence we took train to Tlemcen, which we found under snow inches deep. This was sad, for it kept me almost house-bound; I felt that Tlemcen might be a very pleasant place in pleasant weather. However, we did contrive to see the very finest specimen remaining of Arab plaster-work; it is enshrined in a mosque and the mosque has become a museum. Thence on to Oudjda, the frontier between Algeria and Morocco, and an unpleasing spot, where we were marooned for two nights, owing to some entirely imaginary irregularity in passports. I think that the heads of the Customs were a little turned by the success of their dealings with my suspect typewriter. On to Fez, motoring, for though there was a railway it was not available for civilians, nor did it look at all attractive. We lunched at Taza, the hotel being well outside the city, nor were we encouraged to drive through the place itself, the unsettled and warring tribes being adjacent thereabouts. Why this should have any relation to the possible treatment of the traveller within the walls, I know not. The approach to Fez from the Taza road is one of the most beautiful travel pictures that I remember. Imagine a great horseshoe-

shaped city lying out on the hills, with the two ends pointing slightly downwards; towers, domes, minarets, gates and walls all lying high against the sky; towering white clouds in the deep blue; storks wheeling and circling above it all; flashing streams racing downhill through the city—all noble, in the grand manner, from that distance. One never quite recaptured the glamour of that first impression; once in the city it is not so easy to get a good view of it, and Fez has a notably trying climate, which discourages one from prowling about too much in search of beauty. And those flashing streams do not seem to do much towards the hygiene of the city, for when the French, tidying up in 1917, opened up drains and gullies, which had been undisturbed since the Middle Ages probably, every soul in the city went down with typhoid or some analogous side-show. The souk or bazaar is a continual joy, with very extensive streets, each one for its trade; colourful, busy and full of the unknown (especially in its foods); we were intensely interested in it all. In the Jewish quarter of Fez, and in a sort of souk, but one without the intimate charm which souks should have, I experienced a grim moment. Looking idly at a display of silks and with my back to the roadway, I felt myself rather unaccountably and uncomfortably brushed against from the back. Turning quickly I found the piteous carcase of a dead mule had been swung against me. The sight of the poor creature, fastened upside down to a stout pole, its poor head dangling close to the ground, its poor legs, all four broken, got from me

no yelp, as I think the grinning pole-bearers had hoped, but a burst of agonized weeping, quite uncontrollable; I daresay this pleased them almost as well. The condition of animals throughout all North Africa hardly bears talking about; it is one of the great bars to enjoyment of travel there. A Society for the helping and treatment of animals' disabilities does exist, and it does most excellent work, particularly with its travelling hospitals. But it is a vast country to serve, and a difficult business interfering with other folks' chattels, even when it is to benefit them. From what I saw, I did not gather that the Berbers (the country folk) were cruelly disposed towards their universal beast of burden, the donkey, but Berbers live so very "hard" themselves, that life for donkeys is naturally harder still, with these men for masters; all life is to the limit of endurance, for man and beast alike.

We visited one or two mosques in Fez, and on one occasion the women-folk of the party were left in the forecourt of a mosque while Himself and the dragoon went off to retrieve a painter member of the party who had settled to work on a distant street scene. We two wandered aimlessly around, looking at the fine tiles, at the central fountain where some foot-washing was going on, and finally up one tiny shallow step in order more closely to inspect what seemed to be still finer tiles. Instantly there came angry shouts from behind the pierced cedarwood screens serving as windows on the first floor, then angry heads appeared. It was clearly ourselves who had sinned, but not so



clear what the sin was. All we could think of to do was to look meek and step down to exactly where we were planted by our dragoon. And soon the hubbub died away. We had inadvertently invaded the *mihrab*, the preaching place, or holy place, of the mosque; the tiny step was the only sign of sanctity. I was glad when our men appeared, for Fez has a reputation for religious fanaticism, and I was far from wishing to figure in a scene that seemed suitable to "Sumurun" or "Hassan." There seemed no religious feeling about it all, but a good deal of the theatre, perhaps still more of personal rage and intolerance; so might landed proprietors have comported themselves on looking out of the window and seeing two bad little girls robbing the orchard. About Fez in general at that time there was quite a feeling of drama in the air; not at all of comedy, but of something full-blooded and intense, liable at any moment to burst into action. I imagine that the fact of the Franco-Spanish 1925 offensive being just about to begin partly accounted for this; Fez is very open to attack from the north-west, and it was in that direction that the fighting was due. And so, though the feeling that War was about us was not too disturbing, the unfriendly climate was, and it was with mixed sensations that we departed from beautiful Fez, where we had been so cordially entertained by good friends, and motored to beautiful Rabat, by way of Mouley Idris, the holy city on a hill, which we did not visit, and Volubilis, the Roman city just then being excavated, which we did visit and found of interest. Very

soon after Volubilis came an adventure. For the first and only time we carried all our luggage, packed on the roof of our car. Going soberly up a fairly steep hill, we saw descending on us at an unreasonable pace a lengthy lorry, with tail-end swinging about rather ominously. Our chauffeur drew smartly to one side of the road, for he concluded that the lorry was suffering from defective brakes. And lo! the two right-hand wheels of our car sank in the side track left purposely quite soft at the sides of main roads for the comfort of hoofed travellers. We clambered out of the much-tilted vehicle, and the chauffeur, with lightened car, did all he knew to return to the asphalted road. The more he tried the deeper did the wheels plough, so that after a time it was clear that there was nothing for it but to build up a small track for each wheel from stones gathered from wherever we could find them, and hope for the best. The drop from the down side of the car into a useful-looking field below was about ten feet, and we descended for stone-gleaning. It took us one and a quarter hours, and that with the help of several road-menders who came to our assistance, before all was in order again. It was warm work for the stone gatherers, for when we had gleaned a lapful we had to climb up the almost vertical ten-foot bank, deposit our building material for the others to place, and descend again. The road-menders were good fellows, enchanted with the whole episode, which was the means of substantially increasing the day's wages for them. Towards Rabat we drove through an im-

mense wood of cork-trees, and very beautiful; but then I think almost every tree beautiful excepting the palm, which is for me a complete failure, even though I quote Heine's little poem to myself and do all I can to feel sentimental. With just as much pleasure would I look on a forest of feather-head brooms stuck upside down in the earth; indeed, with more pleasure, for palms in a wind make a most distressful rattle, as of green-painted tin leaves; feather brooms would at least be quiet.

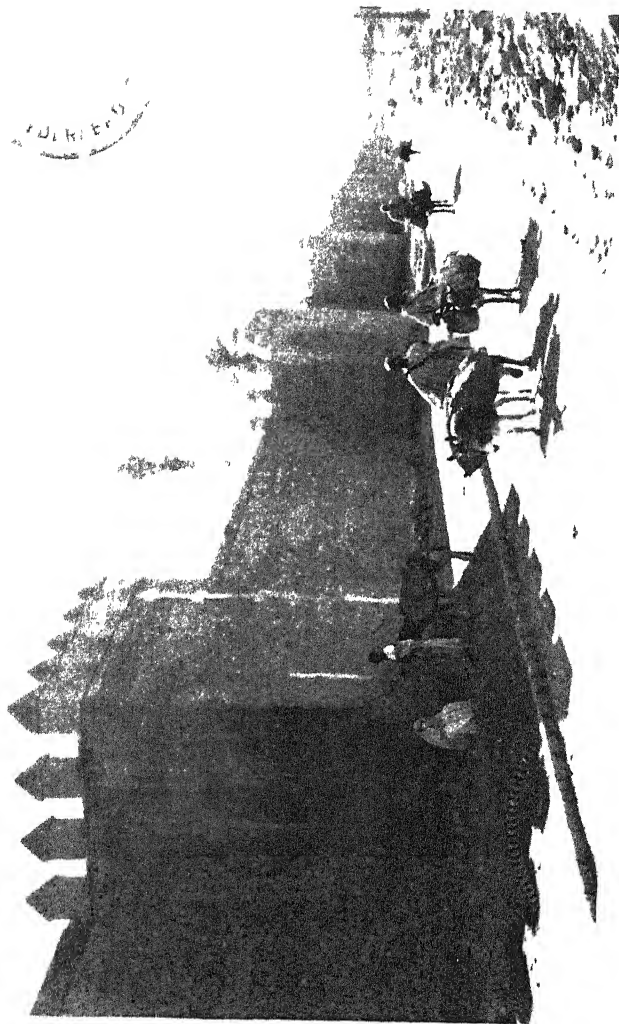
Rabat is romantically placed, high over the sea and at the mouth of a river, on the opposite bank of which is Salé—home till recent years of smugglers and pirates. Old Rabat has been left very much to itself, and the French have built for themselves a new city beyond the gates, suitable to their needs, with administrative buildings, banks, shops, all of the most modern. The villa of Maréchal and Madame Lyautey was, of course, in this newly developed region and well up the hill on which the French city reposes. One is glad this method has been followed, though there is not a great deal of architectural interest in Rabat, apart from the big old palace, perfectly restored, which encloses the antiquities museum. There is a charming inner courtyard garden to it, much frequented, and surrounded not only by high battlemented walls, but by a living frieze of storks, who add greatly to the decorative effect, so that one almost resented their moving or flying, which they occasionally do. At the inland edge of the town stands one of the three typical Moorish towers

built by one Hassan, still remaining, the other two being the Giralda at Seville and the Koutoubia at Marrakech. I think the Rabat one, Hassan's Tower, is less inspired than either of the other two, but it has an air of immense permanence. Outside the city wall there is another old palace, with small grassy hills and slopes and splendid shady trees; little else is there except a curiously pervading charm. It is but the wraith of a palace—the Chella. Storks again add to the decoration, in the trees and on the aged walls.

The Sultan was in residence at Rabat, and we saw the ceremony of his going to prayer one Friday morning at the mosque near his palace. From the minaret came a most musical chant in a lovely voice, calling the faithful to prayer. This was the only time I have heard a muezzin call that was strictly musical; usually it is rather a raucous chant, judged by the European ear. Troops in plenty, the Sultan's bodyguard of stout negroes on stouter horses (a general air of Clydesdale or Suffolk Punch about both) keeping the course, with drawn swords held point upmost. Ultimately a procession from the palace, long, gaily dressed, moving at a good pace, the centre-point a rather gimcrack-looking carriage in which was hidden the Sultan. Three bands, one with brass instruments, the others of unnamable ingredients, played, sometimes all together, but not the same tune nor the same pitch. The return from the mosque was more dazzling; the Sultan, now mounted on a beautiful white horse, and looking very fine and dignified, took his way back to his palace, a huge red

umbrella held over him and an attendant walking on either side of his horse, each swishing a large handkerchief; it was presumably a combined scented warning to flies and other insects and a disperser of germs, of odours. The gay procession vanished within the palace gates; the cacophonic bands continued to play for some little time. Then we all dispersed, but one did feel one had seen something unique; and, though there were spectators, that the chief actors in the ceremony had no eye on the gallery.

A good day's motoring southward took us to Marrakech, the city from a distance quite invisible in the great plain, but the location of it marked by thousands of palms. And as background the whole great snowy range of the Atlas, so lovely, so utterly lovely. They are seventy miles away and look but twenty; they have all the character of a dream—too wonderful for this world. Marrakech, with an exquisite climate and with the most striking setting it is possible to imagine, is still a disappointing city as viewed from the flat roof of the hotel. One would say an immense and aimless collection of mud villages just neighbouring each other and lacking dignity and beauty. Later one becomes aware of some fine buildings, of the Koutoubia, of minarets, of the souks, of the enormous fairground, Djema el Fna, in the centre of the city, where every afternoon the innumerable side-shows, snake charmers, dancers on broken glass, swallowers of boiling water, fortune-tellers, story-tellers (these last had always the biggest audiences of all) display their attractions in an



THE CITY WALLS AND GATES, MARRAKECH



eternal carnival for the benefit of idling crowds. I know nothing like it in any other city.

Our hotel, on the site of the Mamounia palace, was in every way the most ambitious and best appointed of all the excellent Transatlantiques to be found in North Africa. The rooms were large and pleasant, and facing the undisturbed Mamounia palace garden a very broad terrace ran the length of the frontage, heavy sailcloth curtains dividing one's own portion from the neighbours', thus making an outdoor room almost as big as the indoor one. The garden in question was simply an olive grove, with an orange grove beneath the taller trees. For the olive, when unpruned and grown for nothing but shade and beauty, is a mighty and a lovely tree, bearing little resemblance to the tree with dilapidated, torn, tortured-looking trunks that we are accustomed to in the olive grown for its fruit. They are of a towering height, too. Under these giants were an equal number of orange-trees, and during our stay both fruit and flowers from these lovely orange-trees were being picked. Great piles of the ripe fruit lay on the ground, great pyramids of the creamy, intoxicatingly scented blossom, too. Up in the trees Berber men and women were hard at work picking, and singing sweet, gay little songs, carolled just as birds carol, short cadences breaking out from up there in the trees, with plenty of rhyme, but no particular reason. In the topmost tops of the olives were flocks of bluebirds, flying, circling, returning, in the manner of pigeons; down in the garden were many small birds, chief in



beauty, for my taste, being the hoopoe, with its black and white barred wings, its touches of bright red, and its dainty, upstanding crest. In the runlets of clear water for irrigation many tortoises moved quietly about their business or lay without a sign of life. Yes, it was a romantic and lovely spot, the Mamounia garden. And at the very end of it nothing but a fairly high fence divided us from the grounds of the leprosy hospital!

Close by the enchanted garden of Mamounia was a paddock, in which a camel friend of ours spent much of his time when not working at a water wheel. Daily we preserved all bread surplus from our lunch and other odds and ends beloved of camels. When the creature saw us coming he would make strange bleating noises, no doubt intended to show pleasure, and lumber towards us at a slow canter.

Leaving the city by the Mamounia Gate, close to the hotel, and passing through the enormously thick, deep rose-red city wall, one came after a time to some grassy meadows; here and there one could spy bushes of deep blue anchusa, many a dwarf purple iris, statice, too, of that peculiar, rather poisonous pale blue which carnations take on when required yearly for the Eton and Harrow match. The statice, however, must be to the colour born; it had grown undisturbed. Here and there one would see a little group of Marrakech town-folk. Seated in a circle, talking happily together in that unaffected Arab fashion that needs no support from food or drink, only a shady tree, and grass to

recline on; contented and unself-conscious, they made a beautiful picture in their snowy garb and their natural dignity.

Marrakech is the only city I remember in North Africa free from the usually pervading graveyard. Perhaps in the Sadian tombs is concentrated all that Marrakech can hold of gloom and death; I seem to remember that there is among these tombs only one to a prince who died a natural death. In the precincts of the Sadian tombs we were offered our first dose of tea à la Moracain, that is, green tea with sprigs of mint sticking up in the glass, and fairly stiff with sugar. The more one took the less likeable it was; perhaps the background of Sadian tombs and violent death had something to do with one's distaste. While we were in Marrakech, the Glaoui, brother, I think, of that dignified ruler whom we saw in Rabat, was in residence at Marrakech, which was more or less his capital. I was told by one who certainly had every opportunity to investigate the truth of all stories she might repeat of that region, that just a year or two previously the Glaoui had immured alive a wife of his who for some reason had incurred his displeasure, in his palace at Marrakech. I was glad indeed not to have to overcome horror, and appear at the Residence; my friend, in her official position, had to. So, Marrakech is not quite all gaiety; it can have its crude slices of life and death too. One afternoon we motored out to some distant palace and garden; the road was very rough and the car an antique, so that, the next day but one when we again

wished to make an excursion we mentioned to the concierge that he might perhaps produce for us a better car, or was it a better driver that we needed? He said we would not have the same driver for he was killed yesterday. "He was a very poor chauffeur and went too fast on a bad road. The car turned over; he was killed and his two passengers as well. Yes, they were guests in this hotel." This was said in much the same tone as would have been used for telling us that there would be some dancing after dinner—as indeed I think there was, in the vestibule. The troupe consisted of the leader, a tall, slender, very graceful man with an oncoming smile, four adolescents, and two quite little boys. All were dressed in white, and the two littlest had roses tucked behind their ears. The leader played an amazing contraption of wood and strings, manipulated with a bow; I presume it was the Moor or Chleuh version of a violin. There was another quasi-musician, an old man who crouched on the floor and whose rôle was to beat with a metal stick on a copper saucepan. At first a plaintive air came from the peculiar violin; no one danced; now and then there would be just a turn or a languid gesture, falling into quietude again. But soon it was as if they were becoming infected by the music; bodies swayed, though a little unwillingly, steps fell into rhythm, and the dance wreathed and circled very gracefully. At the climax the din from the copper saucepan was tremendous with its compelling rhythm and bedevilled pace. They gave four or five dances, all on much the same

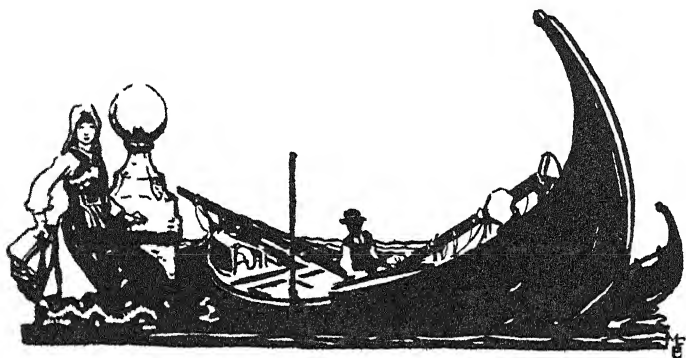
model, with the furious acceleration towards the finish, in each case.

We stayed many weeks at Marrakech, and left with regret, even though one of our party had been suffering grievously there from paratyphoid, and another (Himself) was incubating it; they both had several disabling attacks, though becoming less violent with each onslaught, after returning to England. After one night at Rabat we set forth again for the north, becoming steadily more aware of preparations for the spring offensive. Continually our passports were scanned; troops were here, there, and everywhere; all bridges had their floor planks quite loose, and we were requested to disembark from the car, which crept over sedately, ourselves on foot. Then we were told that one section of our road would be under fire after three p.m. and that we must make sure of passing it before that hour. Almost needless to say that about two forty-five p.m. our engine developed serious trouble, refusing to start. We were not far from Arzila, to which we set off speedily on foot, and sent help to the recalcitrant car. Where to stay in Arzila now became our problem, for the work on the car was going to take many hours, we were told, and our road would be under fire until three a.m. Thus did the Spanish and Riff armies arrange to divide the twenty-four hours—from three a.m. to three p.m. the one side, and from three p.m. to three a.m. the other indulged their taste for heavy gunning. We found no hotel nor anything like one, and were forced to fall back on a very simple

café near the edge of the town. We were shown some alleged rooms (one might call them tool sheds in a less kindly climate); they contained beds, one chair, and one electric light bulb hanging from the ceiling, unshaded. Returning across the paved backyard to the main building, we had some boiled eggs, coffee, bread, all good; but the thought of those bedrooms haunted us. We played French billiards till well after midnight; then the situation had to be tackled and we went to our so-called rooms. I pinned a large gauze handkerchief firmly over the unglassed window, which was small, and we decided to leave the light on, also to lie down fully clothed on those beds. We were not molested by a single mosquito or other biting insect, to our great surprise. Next morning, after shaking our clothes out very vigorously we got up early, thanking Heaven. Strolling further into Arzila, we came on Raisuli's palace, which had recently been bombed to extinction. Breakfast at our café again consisted of coffee, boiled eggs, bread, all very good, and we greeted our chauffeur. But he was a terribly angry man, having been cruelly bitten during the night; he was threatening to lodge a complaint against someone, somewhere. I attribute our own great luck to our having, for quite unknown reasons, chosen for ourselves the least attractive-looking of three little hen-houses offered for our inspection—and so, by inference, the least popular and least populated, I can but think. By ten o'clock we were on the road again, and though we heard distant firing of big guns, we had an uneventful

journey to Tangier. This city did not greatly appeal to us; it seemed less than Morocco, and not quite anything else, though the winding street up the hill was quaint enough. I was haunted by a revolting story I had heard and which I hope is not true, that sick and dying beasts of burden are jettisoned on the shore some miles out of the city.





## VII.—SPAIN, PORTUGAL, SOME ISLANDS, SOUTH AFRICA

THE crossing from Tangier to Gibraltar was unpleasantly lively, the boat small; I found the peace of the Algeciras hotel garden very welcome. The hotel was all-too-English, with its sirloins of beef, horse-radish sauce, and Yorkshire pudding, and yes—I do think!—water-boiled, hard-pressed stinky cabbage and baked potatoes. But I also think it was very ungrateful if one cavilled at this fare, after the semi-starvation one had undergone in North Africa.

There was rather conspicuously “nothing to do” in Algeciras, but we spent a good deal of time doing it; in other words there was always a game of tennis to be had, the town was quite picturesque and pleasant, barring one or two formidable smells; walks were numerous though very tame, and there was always Gibraltar across the bay. At the end of our idle and uneventful stay there arose a nine days’ sirocco, during which the hotel’s nerves, personnel’s and visitors’, had

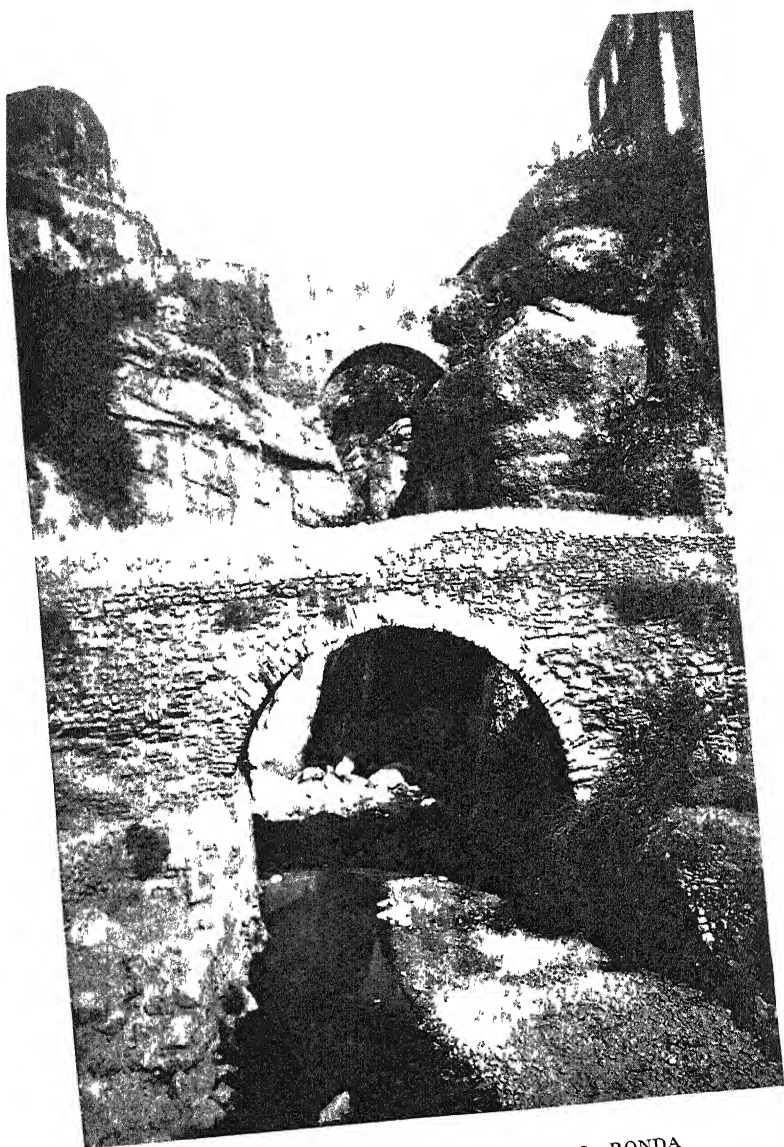


become so edged that one might truly say everyone was ill. We left in tropical rain and diminishing tension.

Ronda in tropical rain, contrived to look very attractive nevertheless, and we left for Malaga next morning feeling that we had had unfair treatment.

At Malaga at last came sunshine and the very lightest feeling air I know, always excepting the Arizona desert air. The harbour, with all nations' ships with cargoes unloaded on the quay, masses of oranges, pyramids of spices, many strange and mostly sweet smelling things, gave us continual joy, the long mole curving through the deep blue water a friendly lounging place, walks up the hills, where in sheltered nooks almonds were in bloom in January, were pleasant and easy. Always the worst sight-seers imaginable, we found nothing in Malaga to which we need give attention, speaking of art treasures; one glance at the cathedral seemed to show one what to expect in general. Perhaps we were perverse and foolish; I know that oft we strayed, but it was always countrywards, and there it was always to our liking, away in the wonderful light feeling air on the hills.

The route from Malaga to Granada leads through romantic and most operatic looking country—the mountains of Malaga I believe they are called—immense walls of rock, deep gorges, wicked-looking little bridges over wicked-looking torrents, and so on. At Granada, after a few days of sunshine and the Alhambra, the Generaliffe, and some gipsy dancing in a big cave across on a neighbouring hill, the weather



THE ROMAN AND MOORISH BRIDGES, RONDA



became very cold again and there was a heavy fall of snow. The tomb of Ferdinand and Isabella, in a church down in the city (Isabella's brains making a deeper dent in the stony cushion than those of her spouse, as our guide explained), followed by a visit to a monastery outside the city, where we were shown frescoes of Carthusian monks being butchered in London by order of Henry VIII, were among our moderately careful sight-seeing exercises. Then I succumbed to Spanish influenza, followed by pneumonia in due course. This was both unwise and unkind, for though Himself was most divinely gifted as a nurse, anxiety at my wretched condition was added to the uneasiness we both felt at my being in the hands of a Spanish doctor of decidedly medieval medical training. One day, when I was at my worst, he announced that he was coming "tomorrow for the money" and some quick thinking was done just in time to illuminate us with the idea—for "money" read "morning." He kept us continually amazed by the strangeness of his advice and procedure, not to speak of his rudimentary English.

In the meantime a railway strike was threatened, and developed; by the time I could stand up the main line to Madrid was involved, leaving us to be transported by what felt like unsprung carriages on a long disused railway track. During that grim journey, lasting all night, my one longing was to open the carriage door and leap out, anywhere out of the torture inflicted on my damaged breathing apparatus by the shocks and

jerks and rollings of the train. Fortunately, I suppose, a tremendous gale with torrential rain curbed my longing to be a quitter; I spent much of the night hanging on to the opposite sides of the light luggage rails of the carriage, pulling my feet just off the floor as the jolts came. Yet, my spirit was not entirely broken, for on our arrival at Madrid we took our room at the hotel, sent our luggage up to it, and ordered some sort of restoratives at once downstairs. I knew that upstairs and within sight of a bed I would not be able to resist lying down, and I had sworn to see once more my favourite pictures at the Prado, or die. After an hour or so with Velasquez and Goya I was quite ready to give in, and stayed unstirring till it was time for the night train to bear us towards London.

How often we commended the Spanish railway arrangements which permitted us to arrive from the north at Madrid about mid morning, giving us the best of the winter daylight for our visit to the beloved Prado; and permitting us to journey on again southward at night. Yet there was a cruel snag, and owing to our forgetful ways, we encountered it again and again. It was almost impossible to obtain anything to eat at about 8.30, for the normal Spanish dinner hour is about 10 or 10.30 p.m. Some cold ham was all we managed to assemble, and that with difficulty. It seemed to be not only a question of food and the hour, but of tenue; there was something distinctly shocking to the Spaniard about people who wanted food at 8.30. So might the hostess of a fashionable London

luncheon party envisage a couple of Lancashire mill hands who had gate-crashed into her drawing-room, and declared that they liked their vittles at one o'clock and reely didn't know 'ow to wait longer!

In Portugal our one long stay was at Mont Estoril, a rather unpremeditated move, and something in the nature of an adventure in those days, for never had the charming name and place been advertised as it is so freely nowadays. We had intended taking up our winter quarters at Cintra, and that it is a very pretty spot we readily admitted; but after a few days of suffering from the bitter cold we enlisted the sympathies of our hotel proprietor—or was he secretly longing to close his hotel and get a holiday at the slack time of year? He himself drove us down, by a non-existent road, to Estoril. There the equable seaboard air, helped by a winter sun, kept us at about 60° Fahrenheit; we looked to see 63° marked by about 2 p.m., and usually did. There we lived through a revolution; and though Lisbon, that seething centre of discord and intrigue, was only thirteen miles away, we did not hear a single shot. The only intimation we had of anything abnormal was the complete cessation of postal arrangements—no letters either in or out for ten days. Then all was normal again, and letters arrived in a hearty spate. We had sent off a few letters in the Consular bag, but, post offices being closed, it was impossible to buy stamps. In a Lisbon museum we were shown a bullet hole through a glass showcase, a revolution souvenir; but I had the feeling that it was a “museum

piece," had been acquired in some long past day of wrath, and was carefully made the most of after each revolution in due course. In the same rather macabre taste is that huge pile of visiting cards preserved on the glass coffin of Catherine of Braganza: there she, too, lies under the glass, mummified. And again, our very plain faced dining-room clock in the hotel at Estoril had stopped, or been stopped at the moment of the assassination of King Carlos and the Crown Prince; it had never been set going since. An odd taste in mementoes, the Portuguese. The language, too, is queer, portentously ugly at first sound; one wonders why pronunciation, so near and yet so far from the neighbouring Spanish, should have taken just the uncouth turn it has. It is true the people are rather heavy and slow, strangely different from their neighbours; but judging as an outsider they seemed to us very kindly, reliable, and hard-working. I would venture to think that their chief failing is a lack of ambition, of enterprise. Perhaps "enterprise and all that" were exhausted in those far-off days when the country, in its great colonizing period, was so depleted of its most active fighters and most able-bodied seafaring men, that great importations of Moors took place in order to keep the home work of the country going at all. This, at any rate, is what I have been told, and that the people of the southernmost province, Algarve, show more traces of Moorish blood than elsewhere in Portugal. Algarve, I believe, is the great agricultural province, mostly in a fruit-growing sense.

I like to remember our chase through Lisbon and eventual running to earth of the makers, painters, bakers, glaziers, and sellers of the only tiles now being made in all Portugal that we could find to our taste. The two men did the whole of the work; the designs were blue on white and very like Delft designs. They showed us their work in its various stages, and we were glad to order some thousands to be sent to England; they were simply shipped from Lisbon, and I have some in front of me as I write. Very odd that two men should produce the only modern tiles in all Portugal, so far as we could see, that were bearable in colour and design. All the rest, one might say, were in the worst period of Early linoleum as to designs and colours—linoleum or worse.

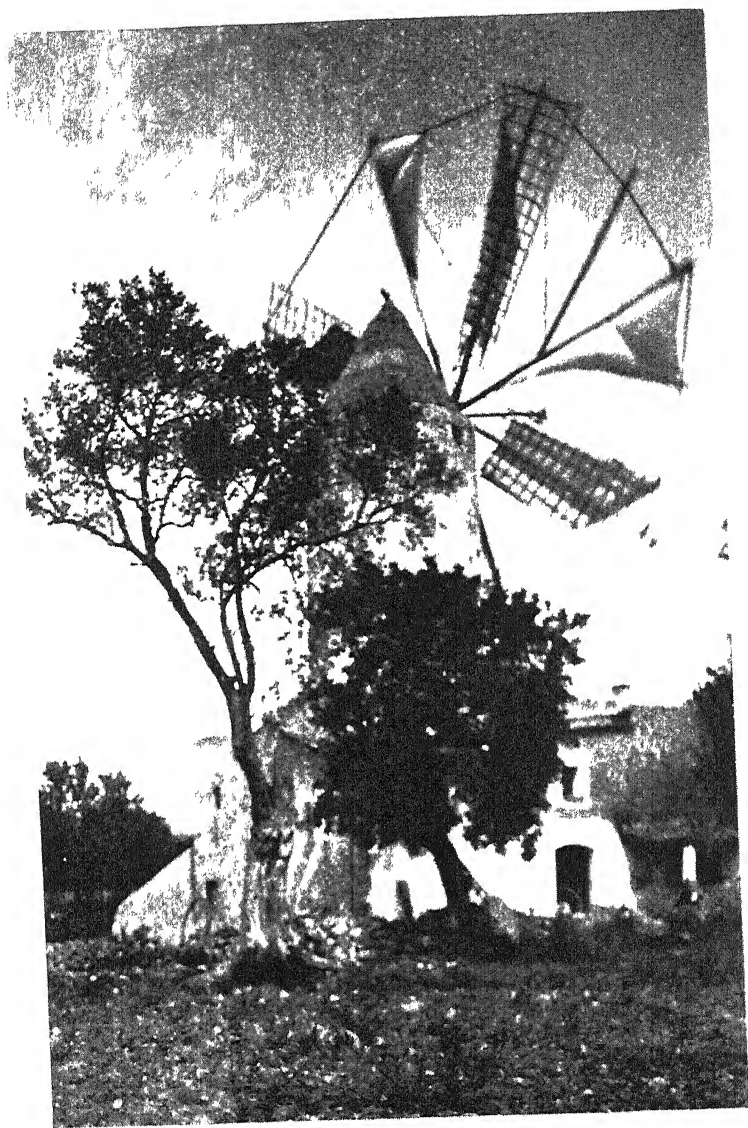
Lisbon is a city of a good deal of character, not all of it pleasant. The students are distinctly of unpleasant manners; they seem to wish to assert themselves at all costs, and would rather push the stranger off the path than not, as they patrol the streets in groups, mostly arm-in-arm. The famous fishwives, barefoot, with basket of fish balanced on head, are in a different category; they push you aside, too, dripping salty water on you if you are not careful from the fish tails overlapping the shallow rush baskets on their heads. They have their living to make, however, and a perishable commodity to sell. I do not feel the idle traveller ought to do otherwise than skip briskly out of their undeviating path, and that without rancour.

On the inner Place, the Roçio, we were shown



certain cafés as hotbeds of political plot and intrigue; it is all the more cheering to read, as I did a few days ago, that Portugal, for the last ten years, has been the best governed country in Europe. On the outer Place, that very imposing square with one side quite open to the Tagus, are placed the various government buildings on the three other sides; it is really an unique and noble location. One hopes that no statesman, deep in reflection on the technique of governing, has absent-mindedly walked off the Place into the Tagus; it would be perfectly easy to do. But no, they do not walk; their cars stand parked and ready to receive them as they come out of the government offices. I think I would like to see more of Lisbon, but the hotel, next door to the Central railway station, almost begs one to go quickly away. In any case, it is not a residential hotel; the position is altogether too much in the middle of the city and too adjacent to trains. During one of our brief visits there the hotel provided rooms, but no food; probably that memory counts for something in one's feeling of unsettled incompleteness. I dream of a villa-like hotel, somewhere at the back of the city, on a hill, with a beautiful garden and a view over river and sea. Yes, I think Lisbon would be a very good abiding-place for winter, if one could but find the exact spot to abide in. In the meantime Estoril is very pleasant and welcoming, now even fashionable, I dare say, with its White Russian colony and well-advertised features. Cascaes, the next village along the sea coast, is an odd blend of very simple fisher-folk and their





WINDMILL, MAJORCA 15 P1

harbour, their nets, their boats, their gear, and of the palaces and villas of the aristocratic Portuguese world, as well as a frowning, chilly-looking old fortress castle tucked in close to the coastline, and much favoured in the past by the late Portuguese royal family as a residence. The coast hereabouts is rocky, precipitous, dangerous looking; further north again there is a sandy bay. Ships pass very far out on their way to the easily visible mouth of the Tagus. The entrance to this river is tricky and difficult; on one occasion we in our liner were kept circling for thirty-six hours the bay of Cascaes, fogbound and waiting for a pilot to take us up to Lisbon.

Lisbon being somewhat of a jumping-off place, one's thoughts turn naturally to islands.

Of islands in general I have always had a slight distrust; they are too cosy. I don't like the feeling that Cowes can almost see what Shanklin is doing, that Capri and Anacapri can talk about the weather together. Sicily and Ireland are just big enough not to give one that feeling, Majorca also. We made a fairly long stay at Palma, Majorca, a land full of enchantment when almond-trees are in bloom. Never had one imagined such a Paradise of flowering trees; the roads went on and on for miles under a canopy of the most lovely blossom, for Majorca supplies nearly the whole of the almond crop for Europe. There was some variation in the colour of the blossom—the nearly white, the pale shell pink, and the definitely rosy. One would sometimes find oneself straying out of doors to

stand, silent and rapt, in front of one specially lovely or shapely tree, just as one might stand in front of a favourite picture in a gallery.

We were also fortunate enough to be there during the celebration of the sixth centenary of the entrance into the island of Jaime I—their William the Conqueror, who freed the island from the Moors—an interesting show it was. Every village contributed that for which it was in any way renowned; the exponents came along in a procession of slightly separated groups, halted, performed whatever it was they had prepared, in a Place in front of the Mairie, and marched on. All were most beautifully dressed in family heirloom dresses; I don't remember any cheap imitations. It took many hours for all to pass by the centre of interest, the Mairie; for each little group held the stage for some minutes. It was hunger only that drove us away to a very late lunch, greatly regretting our feebleness. On less festive days Palma was quite an interesting little town, though; poor sightseers as we always were, we could not fail to notice the glimpses of fine patios to the town houses of the nobles, fine courtyards to more bourgeois dwellings, all sorts of picturesque nooks and corners, a sudden flight of steps leading up to the cathedral square and archbishop's palace, a sudden small flight downhill to the ground floor, so to speak, of the city, this last lined with a queer assortment of shops. But it was just as well not to be discouraged by the look of the shops; with patience and tenacity one could buy most things. The only article that completely eluded

the women-folk of our party was the shoe; there appeared to be nothing larger than size three in the whole of Palma—the Spanish foot, of course! What did large, shapeless old ladies wear, I wonder? Probably black felt slippers, and in wet weather rubbers pulled over them.

It was at Palma that we acquired an object on which I have always looked with great pleasure—a Greek amphora, one of several that had, just before and during our stay, been dredged up in fishermen's nets off Iviza, where it was known that a Greek trireme had been wrecked in the long-ago days. It seems to be indestructible, and I daresay its long sojourn undersea has had a petrifying effect. The colours of it are lovely, of every shade of delicate rose and ashes of rose. The shape, too, though I always feel puzzled at the pointed base; it must have been a disadvantage. It would be comparatively rare to find a spot where you could put down a full amphora with safety; nor could a holder be improvised just anyhow, for amphoræ are very heavy—even when empty.

Many and beautiful are the routes about Majorca. Going straight towards the mountains inland, one comes at the very beginning of the rise to an old estate and palace or country residence, El Fabia, given by that same Jaime I of Aragon (whose freeing of Majorca from the infidel we had been commemorating in Palma) to Bershabet, his one ally among the Moors. It is indeed an adorable spot to linger in, and would surely make a poet or musician out of any lingerer, so

full of song and story did it seem to be. One could almost see dim turbaned figures flitting away under the shaded arcaded walks, and little bubbling clear water rivulets made a phantom song as they flowed along at either side of the main walk in the garden. More prosaic, but still very attractive, was the farm part of the estate; olives were being pressed for oil in the dim mill, very picturesque in light and shadow. And the handsome young pointer, who loved us so dearly that he leaped into the car and could with difficulty be persuaded to remain at his home! Yes, there was much to remember, gentle and simple, at El Fabia. Away across the island lies the old capital, Alcudia, a port like Palma, with its old walls, very dilapidated, and gateways with portcullis, also looking as if it might fall down at any awkward moment, still to be seen and passed under with trepidation. For one feels that Alcudia has just shrunk, and not grown old with any beauty. We were on our way to Formentor, where all is almost too new, including the road, which was being chipped to better gradients at a good many spots. I did not greatly care for Formentor; it looked out north and had a monotonous countryside of dark green scrubby shrubs against brown rock and earth; it was decidedly less colourful and attractive than the southern and eastern sides of the island. And so by Pollenza, and Puerto de Soller, an attractive little blue sea-bowl, and up again to the middle of the island, and away to Palma content. Valdemosa, the monastery home of George Sand and Chopin, pleased us very







CHOPIN S' A VALDEMOSA, MAJORCA

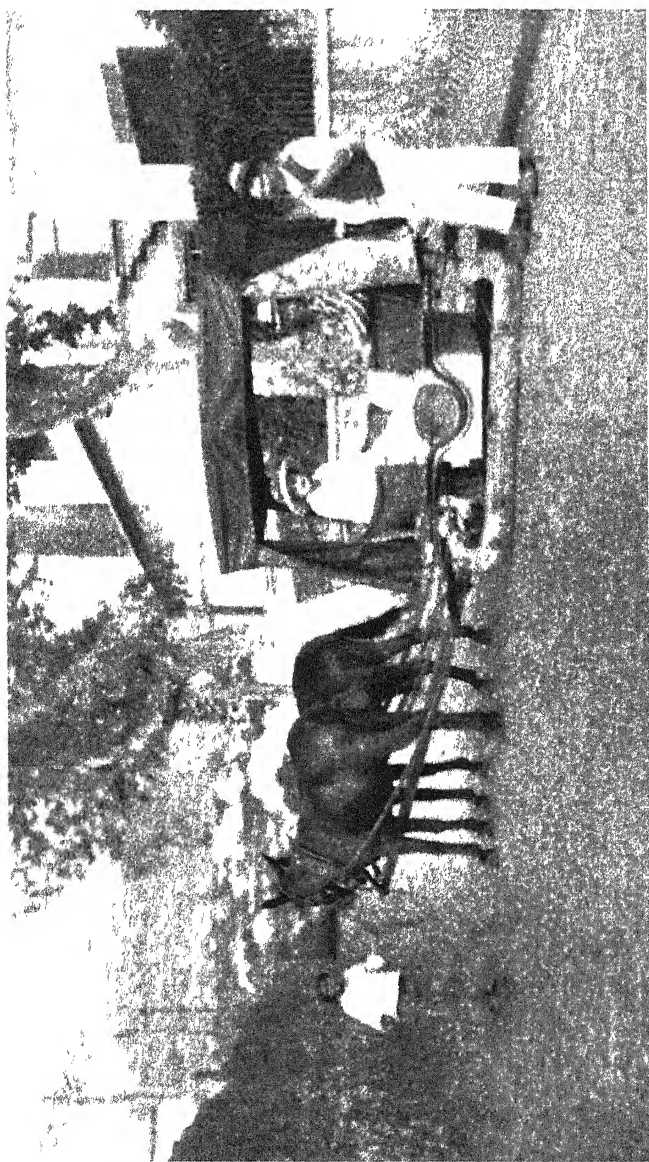
much. We felt that it was really bad luck that things went so wrong with the lovers there; bad weather, bad health, and probably bad temper all appeared to take their toll and make the stay a ghastly and somewhat tragic failure. From their windows there was a lovely vista down the valley, fold on fold; it was like music itself, and so was the far fair line of sea. Close at hand was the closed-in garden of the monastery, full of lemon-trees, cypresses, and a few little flower beds. One should be happy there, and one could, given health and simple, decent food. But for a very sick man and a woman who *would* wear black velvet trousers and smoke big cigars round and about a monastery it would have been wiser to remain in, say, Palma, where odd behaviour might be bullied out of existence or perhaps pass unnoticed. And the poor piano, dragged up to Valdemosa, must have been still poorer thereafter, for it is a woundy long way and a way unsuited to pianos. No, a very mistaken scheme, under the circumstances, for Sand and Chopin.

Walks are many and quite pleasant in Majorca; if the fancy took one to cross a field or meadow, one had very seldom any feeling of having trespassed. One took care to do no harm, though it was beyond human nature to refrain from picking the lovely creamy (with primrose petticoat) jonquils, the myriad purple anemones, and other wild ones. Nobody ever chided us; the only crop of interest to the native at that time appeared to be the wild asparagus, about which they seemed rather keen, but which we thought negligible.

The one tiny snag about the journey from Barcelona to Majorca is, that the boats, though beautifully clean and well found, are small, and if the weather is rough, do not cross; and if a strike is on at Barcelona, which as often as not there is, no one will undertake to get your luggage on board, so that again, there is no crossing. I speak of 1929-1930.

Madeira, a place of call on a south-bound voyage, looks very charming from the sea. Funchal, rising, rising from the water's edge to the sun warmed hills, seems perfectly placed. And one feels thankfully that summer seas are in front of one; flying fish, whales, porpoises, and all the dwellers of the deep blue deeps, will be sporting on our road. But, first Madeira. After a month's stay we were obliged to admit that the climate was enervating, or so we found it. And it was tantalizing to see those hills rising towards a very extensive central region, and to learn there were no roads. One has not energy enough to strike out a route for oneself—in such a climate it would be too formidable an undertaking. So that one felt rather baffled and baulked; very few roads and very little energy. The island, though quite lovely, is not entirely satisfying. Putting in there, on another voyage, for some hours of coaling, we took part in a very saddening episode. The coaling being finished we were making ready to start again, and for the warning of all the crowd of little trading boats which had surrounded us all day the ship's syren sounded—the well-known signal that our propeller was about to





MADIRA VERDE II : L. B. - A. B. -

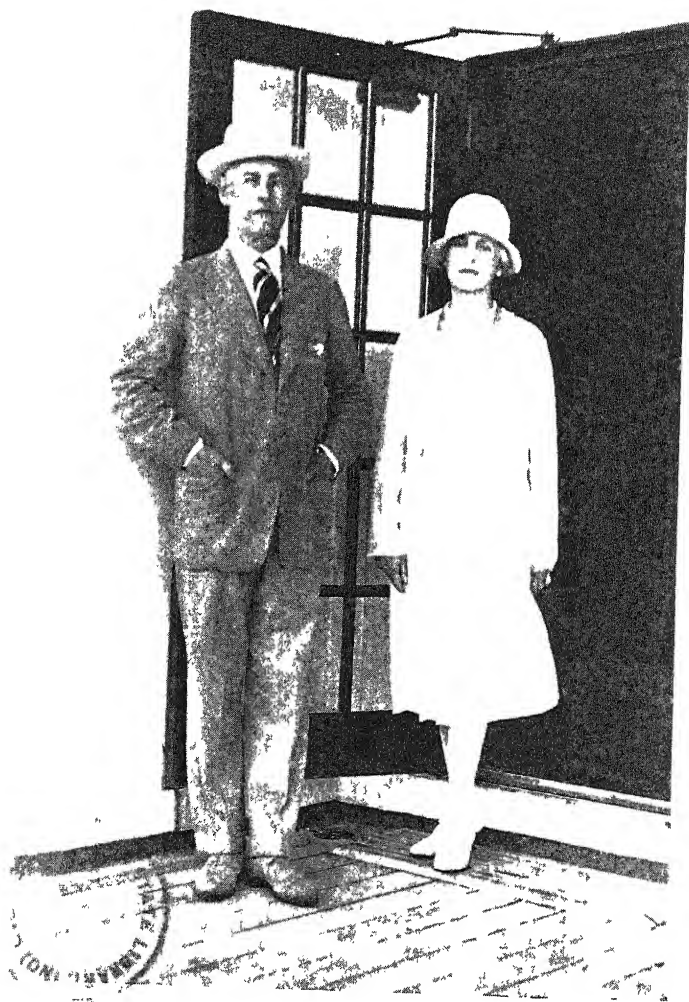
start work. However, one little row-boat, slower to take the hint than the rest, made no move and soon began to be drawn towards our stern. In it were a youngish, very athletic-looking man and two young boys. The man, losing his head, leaped out of the boat, and disappeared; he was not seen again! The Madeira folk being truly amphibious, it is only to be concluded that he was hit by the propeller and killed instantly. The little boat became somehow clear of the current or suction, but the boys were too young and too horrified at what had happened to know quite what to do. They drifted more or less towards the shore, but now we saw that they had only one oar, so that keeping a course was not easy for them. Soon we saw that they were moving not towards shore, but parallel with it. And they could be heard calling pitifully. Officers of our ship stood about uneasily, watchful and sullen, with an air of conscious virtue too. All had been done that should be done for these people, and it was the port's business to send out and retrieve its own; we ought not to be asked to launch a boat and so delay our departure—nor did we wish to acquire for the round trip two children who should clearly be in Funchal, Madeira. And so the contest went on, the port apparently blind to what had happened, the ship's officers very sullen; we personally most unhappy as we watched the tiny boat now being definitely taken by some current round the point, just there an immensely high cliff plunging sheer into the sea. We could no longer hear the boys crying. Ultimately a small motor-

launch was seen bustling out from the shore at Funchal. We were greatly relieved as we slowly got up speed and left Madeira at sunset. Though the sky was gorgeous we felt very wretched and chilled in spirit. The sea is a cruel and crafty monster! and the cold-hearted duel between ship and port over this negligible but troublesome flotsam and jetsam, not pleasant to think about—somehow a cankering memory.

The arrival in Table Bay and landing at Cape Town of a fine morning in late summer was cheerful enough to banish all unkind thoughts of sea or land. We were so glad to be free of the ship (any ship produced in us a feeling of being but half awake and half alive, always, for the duration of the voyage): and the hills, the sea, and the sky were so serene and clean and lovely, that spirits rose high, and I, for one, longed to dance at the feel of the good real earth beneath my feet. And, by the way, what good earth it must be all around Cape Town. Such gardens, private and public, from the whole valley-full of blue hydrangeas in the Cecil Rhodes grounds to the wonders of the Botanical Garden; the proteas, the red gums, the jaquerandas, the silver leaf, the immense variety of heaths all along the roadsides; all, all are luxuriant, profuse, well-grown, exciting. And the vines, as America calls them—so much better a description than our “creeper,” which suggests some kind of bug—best of all among the known and unknown vines was the convolvulus with its intense blue—again better called morning glory, for in the morning the newly-opened trumpet







AT SEA—NEVER OUR BEST MOMENT

shows a magnificent burning blue, which as the sun does his day's work, changes gradually to a blended blue and purple before it finally closes at sunset with purple predominating. It was all so intoxicating that one's eyes roved about greedily, in search of fresh sensations among plants and bushes, trees and flowers.

We did not stay in Cape Town, for Himself needed quiet for his work, but settled down at Sea Point, where his days became strictly apportioned: Tennis before breakfast; work from breakfast to lunch; walk or drive in the afternoon or visiting of friends or they visiting us; and a time before dinner for clearance of correspondence. On most evenings there was a mild amount of dancing at the hotel, in the pleasant court surrounded by flower borders, and open to the sky; on Saturday evenings a more formal dance took place with jazz band complete. I always regret that Himself could not spare hours enough for us to climb Table Mountain; it was too long a jaunt to fit in with his work. We saw much excellent tennis, Wimbledon form, and some moderate horse-racing, no particular form. But at the horse show I remember some hair-raising moments, watching mule teams, eight to a wagon, harnessed in pairs. These were driven at a gallop through a none-too-wide gateway, round a none-too-roomy circular track, and out of that gateway again. The owner of one team sat near us and his howls of encouragement were hair-raising too, as his own mule team fled by at a gallop. The most difficult moment seemed to be when, having got into the circular

rhythm, it had to be abruptly broken to turn again to the gateway. Many teams shot past the gateway without being able to take on another pattern of progression in time. I felt I should have gone round and round for days without being able to do anything about it.

Many short excursions we made in the hours at our disposal: the Rhodes' home, Groote Schur; Groot Constantia, which had been burned but was being rebuilt on exactly the same lines as before; to Alphen, to me the most interesting of all the wine-growing estates, the interior of the very simple-looking house unchanged in furniture and arrangements since the time of Queen Anne; and the wine made there—quite the genuine thing, always sold as a matter of course to the surrounding neighbours, never any to spare for outsiders, still less for export; to the many homes of many kind and hospitable friends, new and old; to call on Sir Lionel and Lady Phillips at Somerset West. And there I received a notable compliment. Sir Lionel, who returned home shortly before we took our leave, confessed to not having caught my name when he came in: "But," he said, "I made sure you were American—you're so well dressed." I explained that, having come straight from lunching with the Governor-General and Princess Alice of Athlone, I naturally had on my Sunday best, such as it was; being towards the end of our stay in South Africa, I had had the feeling of being rather "daverdy" and was all the more cheered. It is astonishing what prolonged travel, with some sea-going in it, will do to one's clothes. Men are





ON THE VELDT, BLOEMFONTEIN

more fortunate, with their tougher and much less exacting wardrobe.

Of all our many expeditions, one to a small place on the coast, called Hermanus, stands out most in my memory. There I met my first big scarlet full-sized wild gladiolus, and the lovely scarlet dysa flower as well as the lovely blue one (a fine of £25 is imposed on the picker of a scarlet dysa, the laws on plant preservation in South Africa being very strict, and rightly so); there we saw thousands of flamingos around and in a shallow lagoon; here we saw our first widow bird, an absurd bunch of untidy dark feathers carelessly tied together by one long streamer—there seemed to be no body at all to the creature. We stayed one night at Mossel Baai, though why we ever went there it is difficult to say; one night at Knysna, with its two headlands and a brisk blue sea coming in between them, so like the mirage I had seen in the Egyptian desert years before; then on to Oudtshoorn, where we tasted a portion of ostrich egg and boarded the train for Bloemfontein. Some way from that city we stayed with a friend on his farm; he was a fanatical tree-planter, but had had many reverses, from drought, locusts, fire and so on. Returning from the farm to Bloemfontein, where we spent a night, I had the opportunity of seeing what a clever creature the rat is. We had been to see a cinema picture, and coming back to the hotel ordered some biscuits and mineral water up to our room. Waking in the night I saw in quite comfortable light, for there was a street lamp close to our window,

a rat climb up from chair to table, and help himself to a biscuit, convey it across the room to the skirting-board near my bed; and, as the round biscuit was too big to enter the hole, break it up neatly and draw it in bit by bit. When this was accomplished I slipped out of bed, took another large round biscuit and placed it close to the hole in the skirting. Again the process of breaking up into neat bits and conveying neatly down, went on. It was a night of feasting in the rat family!

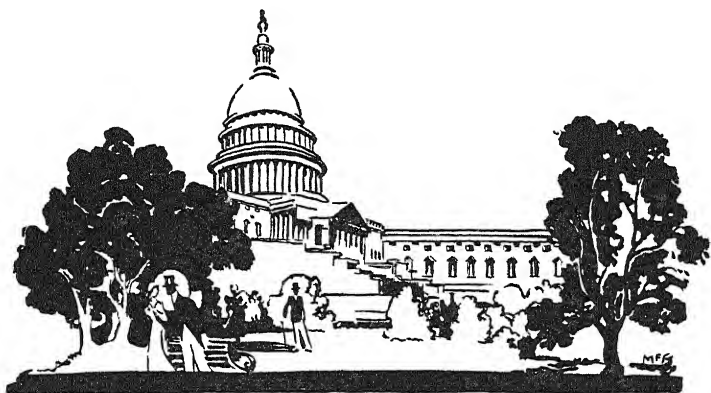
From Bloemfontein we journeyed to Pretoria, where it was decidedly warmer. We motored about the surrounding country, and visited the Premier diamond mine, that enormous deep hole in the earth, quite near the top edge of which the Cullinan diamond was found. We watched all the very complicated arrangements for diamond mining, from blasting, which was most thrilling, to the grading of the dull little stones, which could not at that stage interest one much. There is something profoundly disquieting in the thought of this vast organization and gigantic plant for the production of something so unessential to life as these little stones. How the drillers and blasters and crushers and sorters must jeer in their souls; or do they grow callous, automatic, uninterested? I fear I should feel like blasting the whole place sky-high; though no doubt it is as honest work as any other it is unnecessary—that is the worm in the bud! On the way southward again we stayed at Johannesburg and at Kimberley. Johannesburg was living its own not very attractive life; Kimberley seemed absolutely dead. We were

fortunate in meeting again a young athlete whom we had previously seen at Queen's Club, West Kensington, where he won a race in fine style. The occasion was the first meeting of International University Sports and we were seated to watch the events with Dr. and Mrs. Hibben from Princeton, U.S.A., Lord Bryce, and Lord Glenconner. Now our young athlete was married and settled at Kimberley. He had not lost interest in athletics, however, but took his early morning running exercise along with some splendid dogs, which he owned. We happened on pay day at one of the Kimberley mines. There was an immense long line of workers up from the depths, awaiting their wages. They were a very queer, mixed, rough-looking lot.

On and on southward, and at last Cape Colony, looking civilised and smiling after the great empty spaces, the Karoo, and other barren regions we had passed through. The Paarl valley, Caledon, the nearer beauty spots such as Constantia valley and Nek, the coast road, all that lies at the base of Table Mountain, both before and behind, all seemed very welcoming. Yes, a fine country and with fine opportunities, great varieties of climate, great diversities of occupation, from fruit culture and vine culture, to the deepest mining holes in the world. But there are grave snags, too; droughts that may, and do, last several years in succession, so that, to my certain knowledge, sheep have been sold at one shilling each—anything to get them away from death by starvation. Swarms of locusts, too, stripping every vestige of green from the trees, and



worse still the laboriously planted crops. Then, there are racial problems, which must in countless ways hold back the country: Dutch, British, Indians, Malaysians, Jews, Negroes, and all the lamentable blends which always seem to exhibit the worst features of both sides—all have to be taken into account, legislated for; the various languages required in schools, law-making, printing (of important documents down to the simple advertisement)—all are clogs on development. The wonder is that the progress of the country is not more hampered than it is.



### VIII.—THE UNITED STATES

RACIAL problems in the United States, compared with those in South Africa, seem simple and few, yet Americans are more intolerant and irritated about their coloured people, their Japanese, their Indians than is their wont. Problems and obstacles in that great country are looked on in general as something stimulating to leap over; this particular hurdle, however, is not at all to their liking. In one's ignorance one would have supposed the country big enough to accommodate all: Japanese in California, Indians in unwanted and somewhat inferior territories and reservations; negroes everywhere, but needed and perfectly suited to their jobs as train attendants, luggage porters, hotel servants and so on. Again, America is such a huge conglomerate of but partly-assimilated races in any case, that one wonders why these three races are singled out for dislike and suspicion. However, it's not an outsider's business, and perhaps should not even be commented on by me.

Speaking for ourselves, we have been intensely stimulated and interested during our five long visits to the States, making many, many good friends there—American friendships are beyond all others warm and enduring.

Our first voyage in January, 1912, was a very cold one, and the boat went into New York harbour so completely sheathed in ice that it took many hours of hard work to deal with us and get us berthed in that unhandy condition. A Galsworthy play, "The Pigeon," was about to be produced for the opening play at Winthrop Ames's charming new Little Theatre. Himself spent a hectic ten days of rehearsing; on the first day the willing company worked for fourteen hours. In the end a beautiful production was secured, much better than the original London one. There was a succession of three first nights, one a *répétition générale*, a performance for the Press, and the usual society-attended first night. The third first night was followed by a lively supper, during which I was induced to rise and make a speech. It consisted of about twenty words, not one of which had been heard, I felt, as I sank down again. The play now being happily launched, in early March we set forth to a very snowy Boston, then on to a snowier Chicago, whence we were glad enough to take the Santa Fé route south-westerly to the Grand Canyon of Arizona. There also it was snowy, wild flurries flung about and tossing wildly in the great chasm, yet wilder shafts of sunlight piercing it between whiles; such a struggling, breath-taking,

savage beauty as we had never imagined—overwhelming and other-worldly as the canyon was in every kind of weather, we never did quite recapture the stunning, almost terrifying effects of that first impression. As a wise old American passing behind the bench on which we were seated, gazing and marvelling, said—to no one in particular: “How ye goin’ to tell it to the folks at home?” And indeed that little difficulty still pursues one: there is nothing else in the world in the least like the Grand Canyon, and there is little or no use in trying to “tell” it. We strolled along “our” rim, the southern, which was six thousand feet above sea level, and gazed at the far rim, seven thousand feet above sea level, and at all the thirteen miles of pageant that lay between—mountain peaks, altars, pyramids, all tawny, orange, blood-red, purple. We set forth on mules for the nethermost depths, starting on smooth, glassy iced paths and sharp, frosty air, and descending to real heat at the bottom of the canyon, where the Colorado river flowed, rapid, yellow, and rather wicked-looking. Nothing could accustom one to the strangeness of this spectacle. To all such as have not time enough to descend to the very depths I would say it does not greatly matter; the outlook from the rim is what does matter. And it is very odd, or was in 1912, to realize how few Americans had seen even that.

Our guide on the mule expedition was Bill H., one of those ornamental cowboys chosen for their attractive appearance and manners, who loiter about the hotels and attend to the wants of tourists on the trail; they

make the acquaintance of all and sundry and give information about all the available excursions. Indeed, I think any earthly scheme would have been considered "available" by Bill; he claimed never to have lost his way during the whole of his career, and he had done tours that took a fortnight or so of riding. I presume he was the real thing, for he told us many a thrilling yarn of early days in Arizona. For one thing I can vouch—the very bad effect of the Prohibition Law on him. When we first knew him in 1912 he was a most abstemious person, but no sooner was alcohol forbidden than his lawless nature took fire and he took drink. By 1921 he was in revolt; by 1925 when we came on him again he had greatly deteriorated. We were then all staying in the same hotel in Tucson; the smell of brandy wafted out from his closed bedroom door as Himself and I passed it on our way downstairs at breakfast-time was truly startling, almost unbelievable. On our last visit to U.S.A. (1930-1931) we heard enough of his state to make us regretfully decide not to encounter him. His second wife, a lovely and wealthy young woman of good family and Washington upbringing, had died; he had married a third time and was drinking heavily still. This, of course, is not as it should be, for, Prohibition being once more "off," Bill should have reverted to abstemiousness; I fear, however, when drink is in question, matters do not work out quite so symmetrically. We have known many another cowboy, but none to approach Bill in charm, and I have no doubt his weak character was part of the

charm. It was a grievous downfall; he was his own worst enemy. We met him first at the Grand Canyon, then at Chandler, then at Tucson, and each time he had dropped some "spare parts," alack!

San Francisco, entered by night from across the bay, looked lovely, a promise not quite fulfilled by daylight. On that first visit the city was still somewhat dilapidated from earthquake and fire (in California the fire only is mentioned, so as not to encourage the acts of God that earthquakes clearly are), but apart from that we were a little disappointed in the natural beauties of the place. A visit to the University of Berkeley, though it suggested Elysian fields more than an educational establishment, restored our drooping spirits; a jaunt up Mount Tamalpais and to the Muir woods, where immensely tall sequoias are to be found, the finest straight tree trunks in the world, it is said, also helped. We ascended Tamalpais on that appointed Sunday when, each spring, young men and maidens, armed with metal-pointed sticks and with sack on back, clean up the mountain diligently after the winter's damage and *débris*. I was told that these were college youngsters from Berkeley, and we felt warm admiration for this truly sensible, practical, and splendid gesture. Up they trudged in groups of four or five of both sexes, making a cheery party of the whole day's work; they loved their beautiful mountain and were determined to make it look its best. How I wish such an idea could be injected into the students of, say, London University, and that they would so occupy themselves on Putney,

Wimbledon, Hampstead; I fear we are too snobbish and class-conscious, however. It might be said that it would be an unending labour. True, but ultimately some idea of the indecency of defacing natural beauties might penetrate the consciousness of our vandals . . . one never can tell. In any case, that is what young, well-educated Americans were doing.

We visited China Town, of course, but the glory had departed already; it was not impressive. We tried our luck with dice in a Chinese temple and found that our fortunes were to be good; and we also managed with difficulty to avoid purchasing a little Chinese girl, aged ten. After that it seemed time to be going from China Town, and soon afterwards from San Francisco. After a short stay at Monterey we went on to Santa Barbara, where we found much to enjoy. It was full spring, and every tree, shrub, and plant seemed to be in flower, every villa smothered in beauty. On a second visit to Santa Barbara, many years later, we stayed at a citrus ranch some five miles outside the city and, being a little up the foothills, raised above the mists of the coast level. The ranch was, in fact, no longer an orange-growing concern, but one of those Far West hotels on the bungalow system—that is, with one central hall for dining, and pleasant bungalows of varied capacity dotted about the grounds. It was a very enjoyable life we led at San Ysidro, the morning devoted to writing (Himself was provided with a sun-trap hut in a quiet spot) and to typing for me, the afternoons to any and every diversion. There was a

stout little Ford car ready to take guests into Santa Barbara and back, and this we sometimes used. I remember one afternoon so employed, because of my experience of what may possibly be a record in double coincidence. I was sitting beside the chauffeur, who was also the son of the house, Kenneth by name; Himself was in the back of the car. As we drove along the main street of Santa Barbara we noticed a crowd of people packed at the corner of an intersecting street some way ahead. A man, raised on some kind of block or stool, was haranguing the crowd, and young Kenneth said: "I wonder what he's got there!" I answered quite at random: "Oh, safety razors or a Gila monster, no doubt!" (The Gila monster is a dreadful-looking lizard, salmon coloured with dark spots; it has no poison fang, but an equally poisonous saliva which seeps into the wound of its bite and proves fatal. Indians are said to take the heroic step of cutting off hand (and lizard) immediately they are bitten, and only so save their lives.) When we drew level with the crowd, we saw, to our mild amusement, that the cheap-jack was indeed selling safety razors. Himself and I then left the car, walked up the main street, did our various shopping, and retraced our steps exactly to where we were to rejoin the car. Again we noticed a crowd of people at the corner of an intersecting street, similar to but not the same street as that already spoken of. A man, raised above the crowd, was haranguing them; in his hands he was carefully holding and showing off one of the dreadful-looking Gila monsters! For



sheer blind coincidence I have thought that this "double" is perhaps unbeaten. I don't remember if the Gila river—the special *locale* of these monsters—flows through California as well as through Arizona; I have seen the lizards in both those States. The unpleasant burrowing tick, however, which California persists in calling "the Arizona tick," I have met only in California! At our San Ysidro cottage one afternoon a well-known American artist was paying a call on us, accompanied by his very noble-looking Alsatian dog. I was warned that this was a one-man dog, deaf to blandishments, and unused to feminine society, quite likely to be genuinely unfriendly. However, being dog-silly from the cradle onwards, I could not refrain from quietly attempting to make friends. When Himself asked me if I remembered William Archer's new address, my surprising reply was: "Not till I get this tick out of his ear!" It was a truly Androcles-and-the-lion episode; the noble dog knew that I meant well by him, and stayed perfectly still. I had the luck to retrieve the burrowing horror. These ticks are, fortunately, not so very small—as big or bigger than the pip of an apple, and in shape, colour, and consistency very like an infinitely diminished tortoise. They burrow quickly, and, if permitted to disappear under the skin, have to be cut out. On one of our hilly walks at Santa Barbara we acquired a great many; coming to a secluded stream, Himself, disgusted, threw off his clothes and bathed heartily in a pool. On coming out he was found to be decorated with many more ticks

than before; one had to be very active to get them all brushed off or extracted before it was too late. Most fortunately, they tickle severely in the process of going under the skin; this is a great help in locating and routing the most immediate enemies.

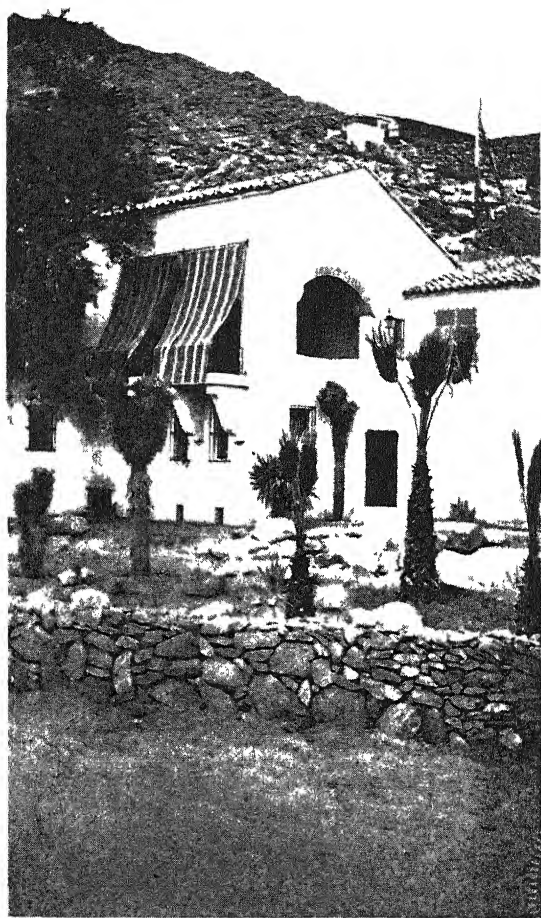
Himself and I experienced a quite small earthquake at San Ysidro ranch, Santa Barbara. It was at the dead of night, and I was sitting up in bed in the grip of an attack of asthma when the quite unmistakable heaving began. This time it was as if some huge beast were stirring under the house; at each roll the cottage rocked from side to side. I had just said, "One more, and over we go!" when the movement lessened, then ceased. There was nothing further, and very little to show for this diversion afterwards. I think, indeed, many folk were unaware of the occurrence until it was talked over next day.

The "homes" of Santa Barbara and Montecito (its suburb) are famed for their beauty the world over; needless to attempt to describe them or the Mission Church, which is the best-preserved of all the Spanish Mission churches, dating from about 1670 and dotted about through the south-west States. From Santa Barbara we had the strange task of sending to New York new instructions as to reservations for our return journey to England, for we had secured our stateroom on the *Titanic*, the lordly ship which never made her first return voyage. Later on, being in Washington, we heard a day's enquiry into the causes of the disaster. Bruce Ismay was being questioned by the Commission,

but nothing very interesting was disclosed. Senator Cabot Lodge escorted us on that occasion; we saw a good deal of him and of Mrs. Lodge during that stay in Washington, and very much we liked them both.

Four hours by rail or road, south of Santa Barbara, lies Los Angeles. Of that city I can say but little or nothing, for I am always laid low there. I understand that it lies below sea-level, possibly that is the reason (for I have always been very sensitive to elevation); however that may be, Los Angeles is always pernicious to me. On one occasion I had to be conveyed hastily to bed in the hotel, and we were obliged to stay the night entirely without luggage; we had innocently motored over from Redlands, 100 miles inland, and I had been struck down while shopping. Nor was there any question of being able to flee the influences at once, for blue lips and blue-white face suggested that I was very near my end, and indeed I thought so and felt so.

Palm Springs is a charming spot in a wide valley, also about 100 miles inland from Los Angeles. It lies at the base of the snow-besprinkled Monte Jacinto. Here on a Sunday Hollywood stars can be seen in great profusion and liveliness. Here it was that one of our party was informed with unction that she was to be permitted to ride the horse otherwise reserved exclusively for the use of Syd Chaplin, brother of the great Charlie. Again we were housed in a pleasant bungalow in the grounds of the Desert Inn, at quite a distance from the central dining hall; so much so,



VILLA AT PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA



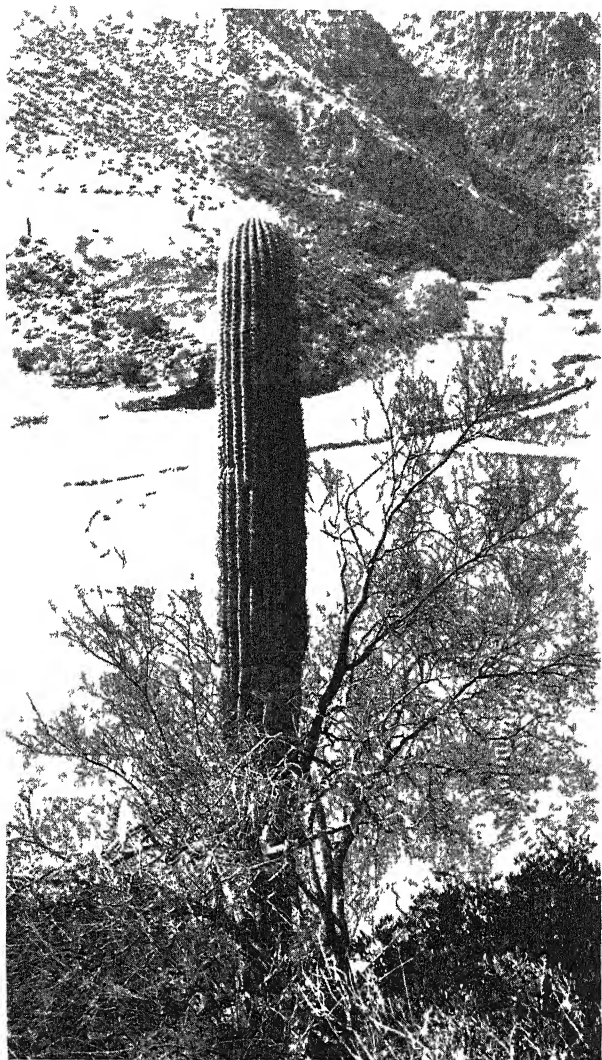
that I remember we were called for by car on the few occasions when the weather was not quite what it should be, to take us to the distant dining hall of the hotel. Yet it had the name of being a very simple place in those days (1926) already very long ago by Hollywood standards. I am told that Palm Springs would be quite unrecognizable to us now, the hotel vastly enlarged, the place almost a city, and with many other hotels. I am sorry, for it was very likeable as it then was. Here we saw what many of the residents had never had the chance of seeing; the flowering of the desert verbena, covering miles of ground with its pretty rosy flowers and grey-green leaves, so close together that it made a complete and lovely carpet. Unless rain comes just when needed, this plant does not bloom at all, and I believe that is so with other desert flowers. A hard life and a hectic one! They certainly make up leeway when the conditions are favourable. Here, too, was the scarlet honeysuckle, beloved of humming birds, who vibrated almost invisible in front of the splendid red trumpets. The little birds are hardly bigger than butterflies, in any case, so that, regrettable though it is to confess it, one knows more about their colouring from the showcases in museums than one does from a life-view, when vibration is all that is visible.

In the village there were curative hot springs; the installation looked rather primitive and I do not recall that we ventured inside. The cure is much used by Indian and other sufferers from rheumatism. A mile or

two away, in Palm Canyon, we found many small pools of very hot water; probably this was the stream that fed the thermal waters in the village. A part of that establishment was devoted to sun bathing; I well remember that one slender white American woman was evidently qualifying for the role of a young Indian brave in some screen picture at Hollywood. She spent much of her day in the sun-bathing enclosure and was steadily acquiring a most convincing deep brown skin; her build and features being exactly right—snake-like and very boyish, with her small oblique eyes and perfectly straight black hair she must have made a most attractive Indian youth—Hopi tribe, say.

Near the entrance to Palm Canyon we came on alarming signs of intended development, during one of our walks. On a very large zinc label, as it might be in a giant flower bed, the words, "Cathedral City" met the surprised eye of the hiker; many other zinc labels bore the names of avenues, squares, parks; I forget if the cathedral itself was included in the layout. I daresay that by this time Palm Springs and Cathedral City (if any) join; if fashion set in in another direction, I presume that the whole city of zinc labels would have found another location; there was plenty of room in those 1926 days—so very long ago, according to Hollywood.

We journeyed further inland to Arizona, our favourite abiding place in all those United States. With air so light that it is difficult to keep one's feet on the ground; with sun so warm and unclouded from



NEAR CASTLE HOT SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA



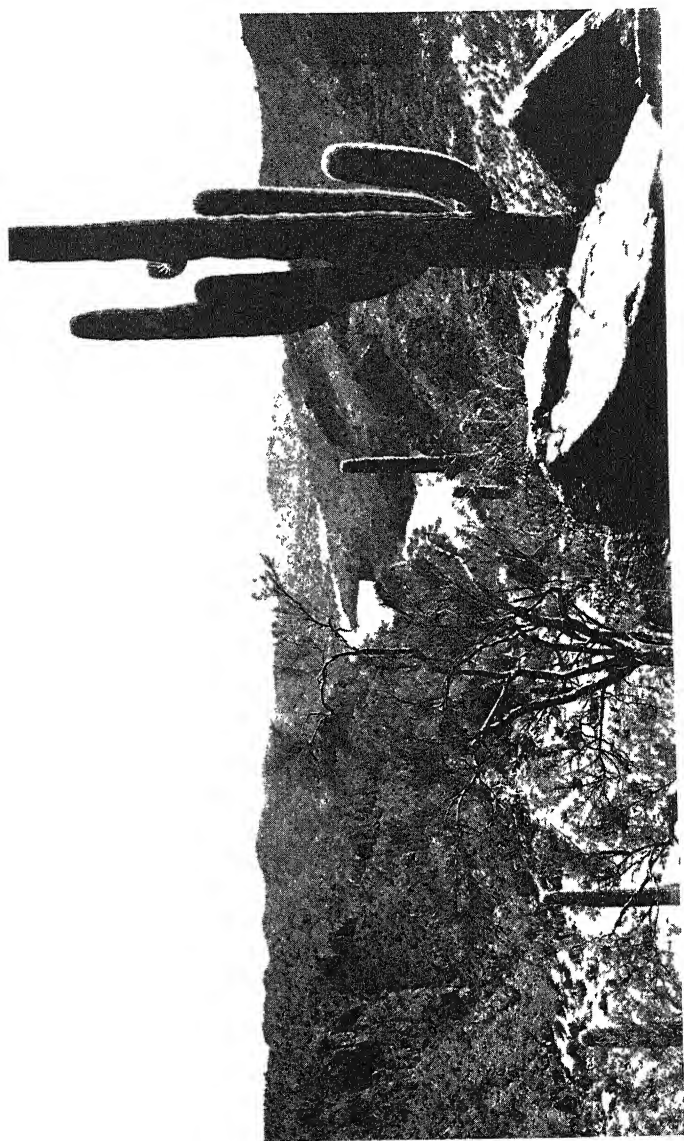


morning till night—but the nights can be briskly frosty; with birds and beasts and vegetation so new and exciting that one has the feeling of being in another world; with glamorous ranges of mountains, lying out at watchdog duty around the plains—mountains that change from rose to amethyst to blue as the hours go by; with a fair river, the Salt river, to temper the extreme dryness and to provide irrigation for vast stretches of cultivated land; with the wild gorge of the Apache trail (somewhat tamed since the Roosevelt Dam has been erected in it), Southern Arizona is a country not to be missed. And what one enjoys at Tucson, at Chandler, at Castle Hot Springs are delights so very dissimilar that there is no possible chance of boredom.

Tucson, the old Spanish-named capital of Arizona, has the greatest share of the desert features; it is set on an immense sandy plain, with the strangest, weirdest of vegetation—creosote bush, mesquite, the giant cactus, the hideous choya or cholla with its fish-hook thorns, the seaweed-like pala verde, the ocatilla or “Devil’s Coaching whip,” each long stick heavily thorned, springing from a centre at ground level and decorated at the top end with a tag of brightest scarlet flowers, the barrel cactus from which a pleasant rather pineapple-like sweet is produced, the night-flowering cactus, which I am told can be heard opening when its time comes, Spanish bayonet, Yucca, aloe, prickly pear—there is simply no end to the strangeness of the vegetation. Strange, too, are the beasts: the jack rabbit, which seemed to be half-way between a rabbit

and a kangaroo, the rattle-snake, about which I know very little, having seen only one and that disappearing into a hole in a great hurry; coyotes, but these we do know something about, for we had the quite unusual luck to see two of these Alsatian-like wild dogs at fairly close quarters; they were trotting along shoulder to shoulder, utterly absorbed in each other, towards sunset one evening as we were returning by car to our bungalow home. One other coyote we saw, too, quite fairly near at hand; but this one was standing in the middle of the red ruin of a dead steer, and the dog-like creature was eating steadily all around him; this was not too pretty a sight and we preferred to think of the pair of coyote lovers. Around the very big plain on which Tucson sits are grouped lovely mountain ranges, several separate masses, the Catalinas which are the nearest to Tucson, Rincon, Tanque Verde, the Santa Ritas down towards the Mexican border, and the Tucson mountains, the most individual as well as the most accessible of all. Among these last were strange wild little valleys, one of them leading to a wonderful tiny pass or saddle, over which one's eye wandered to a far, very-far dream-like country; as we looked, we could just make out an immense herd of cattle moving through it. Here and there were smooth rocks decorated by unknown hands, effigies of men and beasts, and, to my untutored taste, I must confess, not very interesting.

In the city, a wide-spread but rather empty metropolis, there is little of real interest. The old Spanish Presidio



ARIZONA VEGETATION

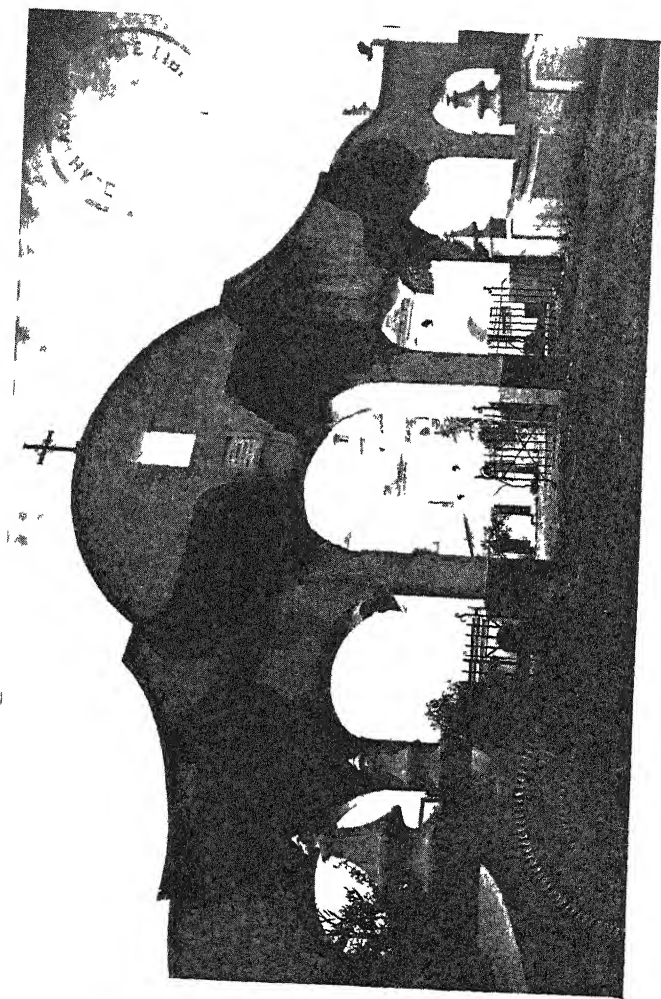


still exists, low-built and simple, but banks, public buildings, and stores all do their best to be very modern. One day we came on an open-air place of worship of Indians, which interested us. A small oasis set back from the street, with flat-topped rocks overshadowed by fine trees, attracted our attention, just off one of the side-streets. On the flat rocks were fixed lighted candles, hardly flickering in the lovely still air. Indians were crouching around the lights making their obeisance, as it were, to some deity symbolized by the candle flames, evidently. We hardly needed to be told that the humble worshippers did not relish being stared at as a show. It was a very strange and touching sight, all the same, even as seen at one discreet glance.

Walks in the desert around Tucson were many and very pleasant; one started with a general idea of a spot one was bound for, in due course a landmark would appear in far distance, from that another point was marked down, and so on. A favourite goal was the villa of a dear friend, who had built her a home after her own heart about four miles away from our bungalow, among a group of villas connected with and adjacent to a sanatorium. It was a beautifully planned house, unostentatious and austere, sitting absolutely on the desert. Inside, nothing but the real authentic, perfect decoration and furniture were permitted, and those but sparsely. A visitor, a mutual friend, coming for the first time from one of the opulent eastern states to this semi-tropical Hispano-Indian abode, looked

about her and said: "You certainly have done it all very nicely. When are you going to move your furniture in?"

There are a great many good schools in and around Tucson; the exceptionally lovely climate makes it suitable for delicate and backward youngsters. The University and the High School seemed very much alive in spirit. In the fine concert hall of the High School we first heard Chaliapin, though to be quite truthful, we had heard a good deal of him in his bedroom (next our rooms) at the hotel as he ran through his programme for the coming evening. In that fine concert hall we also heard our first Russian male voice choir, and very lovely voices they had. At the University riding ground Himself acquired the American forward seat for jumping; for one who had had a life-long habit of the contrary (the English) seat for jumping, this was not altogether easy, but he did not cease until he had completely mastered it. For the daily ride in the desert before breakfast he rode a young mare to whom he became much attached, Betty by name; she was a pretty creature, and very much a spoiled child. We arrived in Tucson on the last night of the year; my entrance to the hotel dining-room on the first of January was not a success. At that end of the room by which one entered were three shallow steps, uncarpeted, indistinguishable from the highly polished dining-room floor, and so I found it, in the rather dim light there. Stepping lightheartedly forth, I flew with a most resounding crash into the room,



SAN XAVIER DEL BAC, NEAR TUCSON, ARIZONA



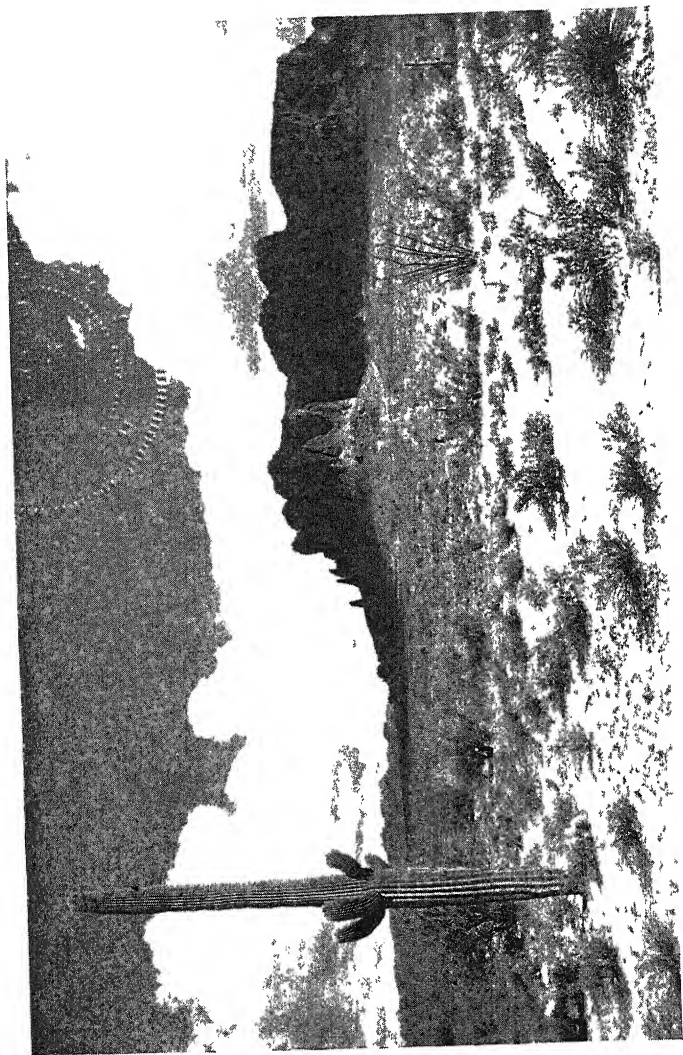


very nearly taking with me in my flight a breakfast table and its two elderly occupants. Picking myself up at once, I was much relieved to see that no one was any the worse, except for two elderly nerves shaken temporarily, and one coldly contemptuous maître d'hotel who, I am very sure, thought me no lady. I do not at all think he remembered to wish us a Happy New Year; perhaps I, at least, did not deserve it. I have always been a lucky tumbler, though frequent. One can become quite expert in classifying people according to their reactions to the sudden involuntary stunt. High on my list of good reactors to the unexpected comes an elegant Spanish literary man who was calling for the first time on Himself and me. Suddenly there arose what sounded only too like the preliminary honks and heaves of a dog about to be sick. I happened to know that our elderly spaniel was only clearing his throat, but no stranger could possibly have guessed it. Dropping on one knee of his most beautiful trousers, and reaching out a hand, the young Samaritan said: "Poor dog!" in so tender a voice that Himself and I were completely undermined; Chris, however, continued to honk with concentration.

Many of the staff of the Tucson hotel were young men working part of the year to provide themselves with the wherewithal to attend the University for the rest of the year. That is quite a usual custom in the States, and one which I much admire. If, in addition, they are benefiting in health, as they needs must in such a climate as Arizona, then indeed all is as well

arranged as may be. The education of Indian children is almost entirely in the hands of Roman Catholics in the south-west. Ten miles south of Tucson stands a well-preserved Spanish Mission church, with school attached, San Xavier del Bac. Judging from the very genial and happy-seeming young Brother whom we have met several times there, the work is well done. On our last visit the school was temporarily closed; neither children nor Brother were to be seen; measles reigned supreme for the time being. San Xavier has gone through some exciting times, defending itself against Apaches, who were a\*very constant scourge hereabouts. Another old Spanish Mission church between San Xavier and the Mexican border, Tumacacari, is in ruin, unfortunately, from the same cause—Apache raiding. We passed it on our way to Nogales, on our only excursion into Mexico. We thought Nogales extremely depressing and ugly, and were not enlivened by discovering that our restaurant, the fashionable rendezvous, was situated in a series of rocky caves, formerly the town prison. Americans at that time felt a sacred necessity to visit Nogales, situated in a country not affected by Prohibition; but we had not that rebellious urge in the depths of us, and neither the place nor its inhabitants gave us any pleasure. It was at Tucson, too, that we saw our one and only Rodeo, and I have no hesitation in saying that, picturesque and skilful though the performance is, there is plenty of unnecessary suffering inflicted on the steers, who are roped and thrown and maltreated





SUPERSTITION MOUNTAIN, NEAR CHANDLER, ARIZONA

in various ways during the undoubtedly clever tricks. Their collisions with the very hard earth were audible from our seats, something like a quarter of a mile away, when they were roped and violently thrown. Riders and horses may enjoy the fun, I do not know and have no means of knowing; about the steers one can't help knowing.

Leaving regretfully the dry, light, exhilarating air of Tucson, we took train to Chandler, an old and well-tried haunt of ours. I imagine that, our first visit to the Grand Canyon being in 1912, we may then have all-unconsciously coincided with the foundation of Chandler, not so very far distant, for I am credibly informed that in the spring of that year Dr. Alexander Chandler stepped off a train, looked about him, noting Mount McDowell over there, Santa Anna mountains there, Superstition mountain over there, and yes! a lovely river over there—the one thing that most deserts lack—said to himself: “This looks good to me!” and set to work to construct Chandler. And there he is to this day, hale, and still constructing. It is a spacious, well-built townlet, a most lovely and comfortable hotel, grounds with about 40 bungalows, and the finest golf course it is possible to wish for. And still the planning and improving go on, the doctor being serene head and active worker. Since those beginnings the huge Roosevelt Dam has arisen, up the gorge of the Apache trail. Irrigation problems are all solved, apparently: wherever water is wanted, somehow it can be brought. And the face of the land has

been immensely changed. The desert has been pushed back for some miles in all directions around Chandler; one-mile square fields of alfalfa, of lettuces, of onions, of cotton, of tobacco, of grapefruit—of almost anything you like, if the suitable fertilizer and the all necessary irrigation are provided, meet the eye. And with all this cultivation and irrigation comes a very equable and balmy air, noticeably different, however, from what it used to be when we first knew it. The desert is still not at all inaccessible; the lovely mountains, rose and amethyst and blue, stand guard as ever around the far distant edges of the great plain.

Twenty-three miles away stands Phoenix, the modern capital of Arizona. It is lacking in charm and focus, and gives one the impression of being in a transition stage. By this time I feel sure it looks very different, for plans were being arranged by which Phoenix should become a very important point of the railway system, instead of somewhat side-tracked, as it was. That would mean a very great deal of development.

Arizona, having been pronounced the best climate in the world for the cure of tuberculosis, may well have its special problems in connection therewith. Among others, T.B. sufferers flock to the State when far past cure, and, having expended their last coin getting there, the State is faced with the care of them while they last, and the burial of them when they die. There is a very big hospital, on the hut system, which we visited, and a great number of colonies, groups, communities, dotted about in the country. One is

never conscious of an atmosphere of sickness and suffering; quite the contrary, for I do not think the natural buoyancy of the wonderful climate could ever be impaired by any number of sick visitors—they simply do not count in that vast background of sane loveliness.

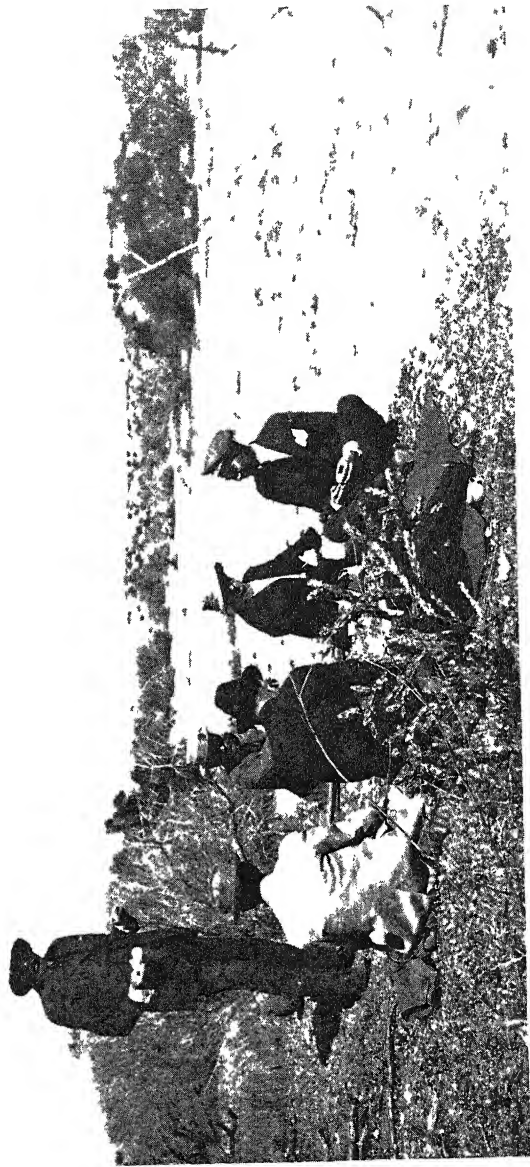
As well as some dignified State offices, spacious and well-placed, Phoenix has its cathedral, and the builders have had the courage to use cedar for all the woodwork in this modern church. It is a marvellously durable wood, and we know what superb darkness can come on it after centuries in some mosque or other. But when new it has a most unpleasing raw pinkish tone; and I often wonder if, in Arizona air, it will ever take on the duskiness that we admire so much when it is aged and toned.

At Mesa, near Phoenix, we had the luck to be shown over a Mormon temple; it was just on the point of being finished as a building, and was decidedly handsome in its planning. It was, of course, not yet consecrated, after which ceremony we should not have been permitted to enter. My memories are of a great deal of good solid white marble, a very large bathing pool, and many very poor frescoes, giving the history of Mormonism.

Twice we made the trip by the Apache trail, past the Roosevelt Dam, up to the strange cliff-dwellings high on the hillside; past the copper-mining district and villages, including the unspeakably sad deserted mining village of Christmas, down to the Gila river (of Gila monster fame) to Casa Grande with its huge pre-



historic adobe buildings, to Florence with its State prison, and so back to Chandler. Our host on one of these occasions, with a big comfortable car and a very gifted chauffeur, made all arrangements, and we had a most luxurious jaunt. A start at about 9 a.m., a picnic lunch, arrival, hot baths, a good dinner, and early to bed, made an ideal day's doings. Our picnic lunches were usually hilarious; our host had the invariable habit of eating standing, while we others usually sprawled. On one occasion, hearing a muffled expletive I looked up to find our host extricating something from his mouth. "Sorry!" he said; "I found I was chewing my tag!" He was wearing his invariable motoring headgear, a solar topee, and the chin strap of unseemly length had become involved with his sandwich. That was the simple kind of incident that provoked hilarity in the light air of Arizona. It is quite wonderful country, and though roads are rocky and in places non-existent, construction and improvements are going forward rapidly. Irrigation, too, is being extended, dams built, water distribution and regulation improved. In the long-ago days a very sad sight, and not to be avoided, was that of dead cattle, long dead and not so long dead; always from the same cause, we learned—thirst. Probably, now that there is intensive irrigation, cattle do not die like that—I hope not. Another sight, odd but very much alive and comical, was the road-runner, the most awkward and ungainly-looking bird ever seen. Yet, we always felt the day had been blest when we encountered one; a



OUR HOST, CHEWING HIS TAG WITH DISFAVOUR



feeling of beatitude pervaded. I presume this was due to association of ideas, for this is the bird who tackles and destroys rattle-snakes. With outstretched neck, and half-stumbling, half-flying, he scuttles along the road like some old lady predestined to be run over. When he meets his enemy he must look more business-like, I opine. Taking American birds on their song-merits, I think we were able to correct a general inclination in ourselves to underrate them. For me, the American meadow lark runs our English blackbird very close; its melting sweetness, very loud and very clear, goes straight to the heart. The only adverse criticism one could make is that the phrase is too short; the actual quality of tone is, I almost think, more exquisite than our Bully Blackbird's.

Castle Hot Springs is quite "another part of the wood" as Shakespeare has it. One feels that, geologically, it is so very recent, that if one were informed of a new geyser suddenly boiling up, a new volcano spouting, a new lake appearing overnight, it would seem very natural. The landscape has a most untamed, one might say disorderly air. Peaks fling themselves at the sky, gullies and gorges appear where least suspected, pools of water prove to be near boiling point, alkali and arsenic play havoc. Close to the hotel, in a narrow valley stands a thermal bathing establishment; a little further up the valley three pools, of differing temperatures, provide the required treatments and supply for the bath houses. The upper one is so hot that it cannot be used for bathing; the immersion of

one rheumatic joint, say a stiff wrist, is all its use. The middle pool is quite warm, and bathers are warned against any exertion, such as swimming, which would be a strain on the heart; the lowest one, tepid, is much used by those who like a lively bathe.

There was a romantic story about one peak up which we scrambled. During an Apache raid, some few of the Indians were driven up this peak, and finding themselves unable to escape, raced to the summit and there leaped, one after another, from the perfectly precipitous top, down into a deep dark little lake which lies some 1,000 feet below; as dramatic and fitting an end as one could wish for a fighter, white, black or copper-coloured. Apaches whom we came upon near the Roosevelt Dam, living in tents on a hillside, looked very far from capable of such heroic doings: dirty and degraded, they stared very sullenly at us, and were not above hurling stones in our direction, as a hint, quite unneeded, not to come too near to their unattractive abodes. Much more pleasing types are the Hopis and Navajos; Pimas at the other extreme are, in their appearance, almost too placid; fat, and round-faced, they even suggest a Mongol strain. Pimas were never fighting Indians; they looked completely at home in Arizona, driving in their little ramshackle high-wheeled vehicles with one or a pair of roughly-kept ponies, the drivers always placid, fat, round-faced, Mongol-looking. They conjured up no picture of a leap to death!

Of Santa Fé I can say but little, being weather-



AT CASTLE HOT SPRINGS



bound there at Bishop's Lodge, outside the city. I glimpsed the Santa Fé cathedral, built by the archbishop who was "come for" in Willa Cather's immortal book, and that is almost all. New Mexico struck one, in passing, as very rocky and forbidding, without the immense variety of Arizona, and with less charm.

San Antonio in Texas was very different from either; a friendly place, with what looked to be an attractive and individual countryside, on the whole welcoming and more featureful than American surroundings to a city are apt to be. In the centre of San Antonio are the remains of a Spanish Mission church, carefully preserved, the scene of an heroic defence against Indians, lasting for many days and ending tragically for the white men.

Journeying east by the Southern Pacific the obvious resting place, hardly to be avoided, is New Orleans. On one occasion of our making this journey there had been trouble along the Mexican border, and a bridge at El Paso was reported as blown up. Our train was discreetly but unmistakably guarded by some very hefty-looking American troops who stood about unobtrusively in the corridors. Nothing happened, however, either at El Paso, the spot where we expected trouble, or elsewhere; our guardians melted away in due course.

Each time that we visit New Orleans, the glamorous past becomes harder and harder to find. When the old St. Louis hotel, with its slave market, had been blown down in a gale, we felt indeed that all was lost.



That aged building certainly was a full-flavoured reminder of the old life in the Southern States—the dilapidated hotel, its bell register with bells (swingers on springs, of course, not electric) still hanging awry in the vestibule, and shabby rooms and staircase untouched. Somewhere on the dim ground floor we came on the slave pen, the rostrum of the auctioneer still in position, his name carelessly chalked on a blackboard behind it. And, on coming out from that dim sad pen we heard an odd clanking and tapping; and lo! across the broken marble black and white squares of the hall floor came an old ghost-like white horse stalking towards us. Yes, a very strongly flavoured bit of the past, absolutely unfaked; I was sorry to find no trace of it on our last visit. Outside Savannah another similar reminder exists intact. The Hermitage is an old Southern mansion, authentic in architecture, melancholy, elegant; the slave quarters and overseer's house are still there, nearby. The slave quarters, indeed, are still inhabited, and by negroes, though no longer slaves. These two were extremely helpful relics for the traveller to see; the old Southern life lies before him, unforgettable, embalmed.

Charleston also helps to re-embody the past. There are fine old houses both in and outside of the city. Outside, Magnolia Gardens, which might have been more fitly called Azalea Gardens at the moment of our visit, provided a memorable picture; azaleas, of all colours and kinds, were in full bloom, ten to twelve feet high, some of them, here showing against a back-

ground of quiet unbroken green, there reflected in glowing masses in a quiet lake; it was opulent, southern, completely lovely. Runnymede, a neighbouring estate, gave one a different, but equally poignant impression—sad, romantic, wistful; the house had been burnt down and replaced by one of more simple build, which went strangely with the fine estate. I remember that, over the fireplace in the living-room, hung a portrait, Georgian I think in period, of a young man in scarlet uniform, dark, grave, reliable; an exact replica of our young host in the life on that day. Himself built up a character in one of his novels of that grave, attractive young man, whom, with his ancestral portrait, we saw but that once. Yes, it told much of the past, Runnymede, and I was very grateful to have been made welcome there.

Washington is, quite naturally, the city to which one feels most drawn as a place of residence. It has considerable beauty of location, and its architecture is very fine—one might say exciting, so beautiful are most of the quite modern "homes." And its surroundings—Mount Vernon, Arlington, Rock Creek Park and Cemetery—wildly exciting, though it is an odd word to use about a cemetery. But here is the masterpiece of St. Gaudens—the monument to Mrs. Adams, to which everyone bows down in admiration, I think, but to which no one has ever succeeded in giving exactly its title—the nearest perhaps being *Mystery*, though that is far from being all that is expressed in the bronze figure, seated there in the deepest aloofness that ever

was suggested in sculpture, or any other art, I think. This, and the St. Gaudens "Lincoln" at Chicago are assuredly great work. And Mount Vernon, that jewel set on a green hill, it is hard to find words to begin to describe its perfection. It has been preserved or reconstituted with a loving care and completeness that not even the streaming crowds of noisy tourists can for one moment shake. Can one ever forget that flute that the General has just laid down while he steps into another room to make a note of something to be attended to tomorrow? He will be back in a moment, and will take up his flute and resume that charming little air by Pergolesi that he had been playing! Arlington is far from being so successful as a memorial to the great General Robert E. Lee. This is strange, for the relics of the Civil War time must be much more easily assembled. Naturally, they are not so effectively remote, so "period" as the Washington relics are; but they soon would be. Somehow, the Lee memories have not been recaptured. And it cannot be from carelessness, for nowhere is the past so revered, so enshrined, so cherished, as in America.

We were always at Washington in the spring; more than once at cherry blossom time. The Tidal basin, surrounded by 20,000 cherry trees donated by Japan, and all in bloom of a sunny day of spring, is a sight to go to one's head. We were, I believe, one of 46,000 cars wending their way round this basin on our last visit on Cherry Blossom Sunday; and a great fever we were in lest we should be unable to get out of the pro-

cession in time to get to a lunch to which we had been invited.

One of the few really distressingly ugly buildings in Washington was the British Embassy; of the worst period of Domestic Gothic, or was it Domestic Brownstone? It cried aloud to Heaven. And I believe that its prayer has been heard; on our very last flying visit to Washington I seem to remember that we Britons had a new home, though just then we personally were too hurried to be able to investigate. All the same, the very ugly old house gave us some cordial welcomes; I particularly remember a very pleasant lunch with Lord and Lady Reading and Nicholas Longworth—a notable feeling of home in a far-distant country. I don't know if a peculiarity of that very able man, Lord Reading, has been commented on—his ability to sustain at least three layers or trains of attention at one and the same time. With a courteous participation in my conversational needs (which certainly did not entirely engross him) he was carrying on a rather intricate argument with Nicholas Longworth, and very ably guiding the talk at the other end of the table, where Lady Reading, who was somewhat deaf, was presiding. And all with the utmost quietude and serenity.

When one comes to the edge of the subject of American hospitality, friendly care for the wayfarer, warm understanding, one simply does not know how and where to begin, so vast and palpitating is the subject, so heartening and overwhelming the memories thereof. Perhaps one had better not attempt it, but

only record most grateful thanks for the myriad kindnesses, the continual attitude of interested and lively friendliness we have received in such abundance from even the merest acquaintances as well as the intimate friends over there. Perhaps it will be simpler—it certainly will—to look at the reverse of the medal. Almost the only unamiable folk in America, so far as our experience went, were the Customs and passport officials, and here and there a hotel registering clerk. The latter were obviously suffering from digestive troubles, but the former were too invariably ironclad to be accounted for in any such way. Probably the voice and manner are an occupational disability. How could any man speak to, say, a nice young woman, in that extraordinary double-double bass growl, adding the baleful glare of a glance which plainly says: “Bring out your contraband stuff! No use lying about it!” And the passport officers are not much better. What is it they are longing to discover? One cannot in any way make their task any lighter. Do they think one has stolen one’s blameless passport? If one were suffering from leprosy they could hardly wear a more forbidding air, nor if one were trying to steal some valuable document from under their noses. The double-double bass growl is not really effective either. I, for one, always feel inclined to giggle when I hear it, like the boy named Jones, who was stumbling through the lines of Hecuba’s speech in the Greek tragedy. This was at Harrow, and the great Headmaster, Dr. Butler, unable to bear any more, took up

the story. “‘ Ai, ai, papagai!’ ” he intoned with unction. “If you had heard that, Jones, what would you have done?” And the boy Jones, shifting about unhappily on his feet, replied: “I should ha’ laughed, sir!” Dr. Butler covered his eyes with his hand and breathed out: “Oh, Jones!” One more little Butler story before I leave Harrow. Having cogitated over certain plans for the improvement of the school curriculum, he called a meeting of masters and explained his views. This being done, he said: “Signify assent in the usual way!” But not a single hand was held up in support. “Then I shall adopt it with the greater regret!” said the great Headmaster very blandly.

To return to America: I always feel that that great country has an abundance of great men at work, or ready to be at work, in her service. No harrowing necessity arises, as a rule, to extend them, still less to exhaust them, and so they are apt to make problems to play with, or to worry at, according to their temperaments, just to keep themselves fit, as it were. I am thinking of one great man in particular—Theodore Roosevelt, who, after most strenuous times of varied work and play, enough to satisfy the energies of a dozen men, went off to tropical South America. There was no harrowing necessity about it; in this new work and play he was measuring himself against the hardships of swamp and forest, with little thought of failing to come out top dog, I imagine. But he got himself so bitten, so stung, so infected, so broken by the horrible conditions of that life that he came home a very sick

man, and never recovered. What a pity, seeing that he was interested in everything that was worth while; one imagines that there were hundreds of other things that he might have done with at least equal pleasure and so much more profit to his country, which he surely loved. Whereas, who is benefited by knowing that a tropical river has a name or no name, or what its feeble course may be? Of a vastly different type was Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, who took all the work that came his way with deadly seriousness and weightiness; yet he gave one the feeling that his powers had never been fully extended, that he would never have been found wanting, whatever his country's dire necessity. A man of the utmost integrity and of but little pliability, somewhat unapproachable in public, and probably well hated and hating, he had in private life quite lovely manners, a formidably well-stored mind, and even some geniality. There could not be two opinions about Mrs. Lodge: she was one of America's very greatest ladies; there is nothing to add except to note her extraordinary sweetness and charm for ever breaking through. To take a few names that occur to one quite at random, in politics, business, art, travel—Elihu Root, Bourke Corkran, Cyrus Curtis, Augustus Clay Bartlett, Roy Chapman Andrews, George Bellows—I could never feel that any one of them had ever revealed his full powers, still less that he had ever felt the waters of adversity flow over his head. Many, many good friends we have made on the other side of that vast, tedious North Atlantic, both men and

women; about most of them I have the same feeling—that they would come triumphantly through so much more than life has ever demanded of them; that they would never buckle under pressure, never own themselves beaten. This it is, I suppose, to be the child of a young nation, young and so little spent. The less pleasing elements, hysteria, lawlessness, brutality, come from the same cause, no doubt—Latin, Mexican, Indian, and other quick-running bloods not yet assimilated, and civilization so recently consolidated that there is still the impulse to take the law into one's own hands. Less easy to understand is the prolonged cat-and-mouse game in which the law now indulges in dealing with gangsters, murderers, kidnappers; it is all too much like a game of poker, so enjoyable in itself that the real object seems to be lost sight of. And again, the delayed sentence on doubtful criminals: there is the poker game feeling about this too; the doubtful criminal held in custody for years while fresh evidence is searched for, then suddenly when hundreds of extraneous issues have been involved, but no new fact elicited, the prisoner is electrocuted for no additional reason. I dare say I speak as a fool, but I cannot feel happy about it.

The universities of the States are many and very various. To mention only those we visited: Columbia in New York, Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Chicago, Ann Arbour, Berkeley, Tucson; all these we knew fairly well, but there are a great many others; plenty of choice for American youth. As for schools, they simply



swarm; the south and south-west would seem to be fanatical on the subject. At New Orleans a generous donor of funds for educational purposes made a proviso that a new school should be built every twenty-eight years. The result is that the city is heavily over-schooled and getting more so.

The theatre, on the other hand, is rather overlooked as an educational medium, and is rather lowly in its expression and aims, with a few notable exceptions. In Washington itself, in full season, we had no better choice in opera than "Trovatore," "Traviata," "Norma," and suchlike, with an occasional dash into modernity with—"La Tosca." Even in New York, except under a few enlightened theatre men like Winthrop Ames, the standards are apt to be rather low. I remember an American friend, à propos of a stage-daughter rôle—I think it was that of Margaret in "Dear Brutus"—saying that no American actress would be safe in that part, for she would not be able to resist showing to the audience how ably she could make love to her (stage) father! I don't know if such naïve treatment of a rôle would still be permitted; I should very much doubt it, for Americans are, above all things, quick of perception. Over-acting, however, is another matter; given the national temperament, with its determination to do a thing to the *n*th degree or die in the attempt, it is not easy to get them to suppress themselves for the sake of ensemble. This seemed to me to show even more in the world of music than that of the theatre; one can almost trust oneself

to pick out the native-born members of an orchestra from the way in which they are getting every hair's-breadth of sound out of their instruments; you feel that to them, frankly speaking, nothing else matters, and if the fiddle, say, comes to pieces in the process it is the player's misfortune, not his fault. As to "fine shades and nice feelings" and teamwork, is not the highly paid conductor there to see to all that sort of thing?

In sport it is much the same. According to our ideas, Americans play a game so that it is no longer a game. Every time we witnessed a football match there was quite a crop of casualties—broken collar-bones, sprained ankles, limping legs from torn muscles; ears, of course, are strapped to the head in all countries now, and just as well it should be so. The battle cries organized by each side, at both football and baseball, are quite a feature of the game; many, too, are the choice insults hurled at the enemy, independent of these clannish cries. I remember a Tucson wit, yelling at the hefty-looking undergraduates from Nevada (Reno, of divorce fame, is in Nevada) during a university football game between Arizona and Nevada: "Come on, get to it, you ex-husbands!" I felt, prudishly I dare say, that such a remark would not be quite in order from an English audience. Not that we are lacking in our little ways; in France I have several times seen a football referee escorted from the ground by protective police; and on one occasion, at a manifestly unfair decision by a referee, there was a general

shouting by the audience; we rose up as one man and flung our leather cushion seats (which we had hired for our comfort) into the arena, by way of protest! Of baseball I understand so little that any comment would be out of place. Comparing the feeling, which runs very high at this truly American game, with that at pelota, most exciting of all games to me (whether of the indoor or the outdoor variety), on our side of the Atlantic, the sharp, very tense occasional calls of the pelota players, the acutely thrilling rapid rallies, the quiet scoring (except when by rare chance the two sides are equal, when the scorer bursts into song), the rare pistol-shot explosions of applause now and then, the irrepressible lightning bets that pass across and across in the audience, I must confess to my preference for the European way of play, or perhaps it is the game itself. I have taken baseball as the fine *fleur* of American, as pelota is the fine *fleur* of European, games, for comparison. Football, having drifted from country to country, does not provide a true parallel. The very heartstrings of America, the very heartstrings of—say—France vibrate in those two typical games—baseball and pelota. How far the two continents are apart, after all, one may glimpse by contrasting both the players and spectators; impossible to imagine oneself, as European spectator, gently howling with excitement at baseball, as I have only too often heard myself doing while watching pelota.

American art collections are very important and very admirable. Good judgment and unlimited purchasing

power, added to the will to display every item to the best advantage, have combined to give to the world some of the best equipped and lighted art galleries in existence. And their contents are at least as admirable. I doubt if there is another collection to come anywhere near that of Mrs. Jack Gardiner in Boston for quality and for skilful arrangement. If she bought, for example, a statue of Buddha, she would be quite likely to purchase a temple to place it in, so as to provide an adequate background. A most remarkable woman and, in my humble opinion, an undoubted re-embodiment of a Medici potentate. There was a kind of reckless purposefulness about all she did—the one thing she would have felt too mean for words would be to count the cost. I was told that at more than one period of her life she had been obliged to cut down her personal expenses quite drastically, almost cruelly; having set her mind on some special treasure, necessitating a colossal outlay, nothing else mattered.

In New York the Metropolitan contains many priceless treasures. The Morgan Library has not a rival among the private collections of the world; the Havemeyr and Frick picture galleries (the former especially devoted to French work, the Frick to Old Masters); the Hispano-American museum; the Adolf Lewisohn pictures; the Chinese pictures owned by Dr. Petersen, all are most lovely, valuable, unique. Many others I daresay there were in New York, but I speak only of what we saw and enjoyed. It was at Yale, I think, that I found one of the very best Gainsboroughs

I ever saw: a portrait of William Pitt, when young. Chicago's Fine Art Museum has some very interesting examples of an American painter, Innes; Cincinnati has, or had, the finest Daubigny that ever was, one of the jewels among the excellent Taft collection; the Freer Gallery at Washington, where every picture is carefully hung to the best advantage and all the arrangements are perfect. Most unfortunately one's memory of it is dinged by the knowledge that the Whistlers there are becoming darker and dimmer, owing to the painter's use of a certain pernicious colour or colours, now affecting most of his work. At the Freer Gallery the Peacock Room, of which so much has been heard, has been reconstructed. It was not so distractingly beautiful as I had expected. I can think of many a less self-conscious room in which I would prefer to pass my time, or even look at in passing—a very different proposition. Another most interesting museum at Washington is the Smithsonian, where a large amount of space is devoted to the exact reproduction of life in Indian tribes. Each monster glass case contains a scene of daily life, with life-sized figures carefully modelled, correctly posed, dressed, backgrounded, and with all the gear of their avocations around them. The hunting, the fishing, the silver-workers, basket-makers, potters, leather-curiers; each tribe has its separate habitat, and all is most excellently arranged to give one an adequate idea of the home life of Indians. The same plan of reconstruction in every detail of animal and bird life is followed at the Natural

History Museum in New York, and of course to a large extent in most museums, but I think nowhere with such perfection as in the Indian section of the Smithsonian. One day I saw there a magnificent Indian in the life, an old man, upright and very nearly seven feet in height, I should guess, inspecting with interest the life in effigy of the many tribes. It appeared that he was still a very important chief, and was in Washington on legislative business for Indians in general.

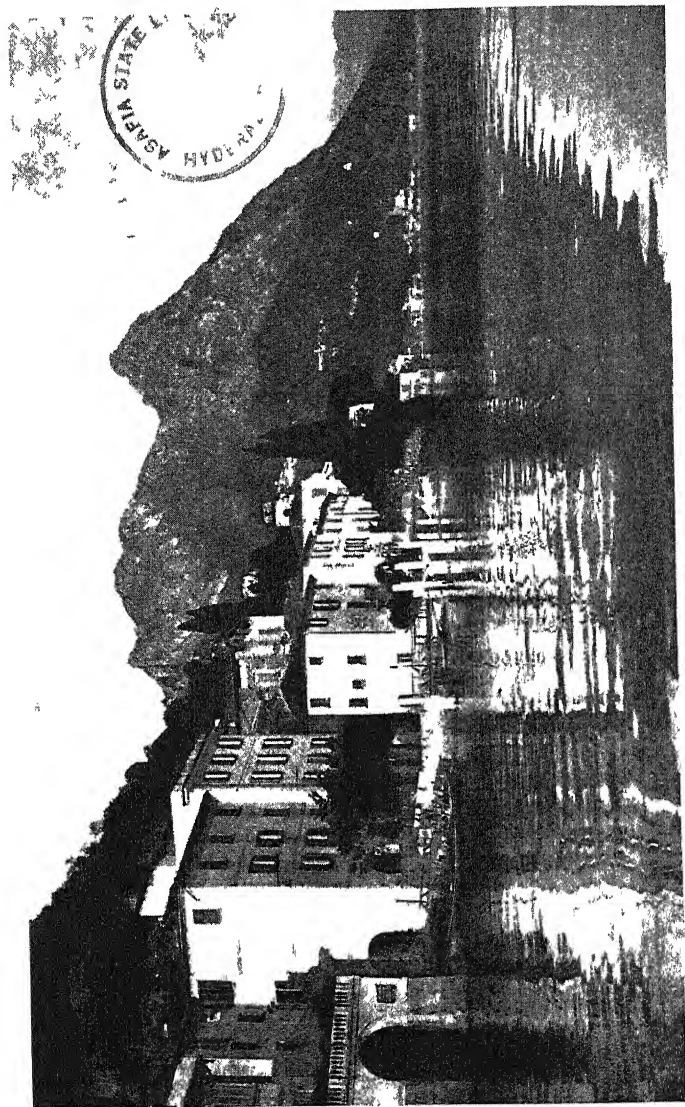
Thinking idly on Smithsonian lines, I suddenly wondered why zoos could not so be remodelled? I hear at once a howl of rage from fond parents and grandparents, who find in zoos a perfect dumping place for the young of the human species. I am, however, thinking of the captive animals; the wretched eagles and vultures moping in cage corners, deprived of their flights; the lions, the shabby tigers, leopards, bears, giraffes, in fact every animal who would naturally spend its life roaming hundreds and hundreds of miles in freedom. It is an abominable life that they lead in a zoo, disguise it as we may; no need to add the thought of the methods of their capture and transportation to this all-unsuitable climate of ours, speaking of English zoos, Whipsnades, and such like. We ought to know better, and we do—but animals have no rights and no words; Man can be as mean as he wishes, with impunity—and, after all, an animal can always die when he has had enough of it.

America's domestic architecture and its corollary, interior decoration, we thought beyond praise. Fearless

and good taste in colour blendings for "drapers" and mural decoration, very beautifully and skilfully planned "homes," especially in New York and Washington, led us to the conviction that America leads the world in these matters. No doubt, in view of the advantage she has, in being young enough to profit by the rest of the world's mistakes, she ought to lead, but it needs, in addition, a flair for the best way to make improvements; it's perfectly easy to fall into yet more egregious errors than ever, while studying the past and intending to profit by its lessons. The two abiding styles in American domestic architecture are the variants of the "Colonial" model, and the Spanish type of building, this last more especially in the west and south. Infinite development is possible of these excellent themes, and one does not tire of the results, they are so intelligently worked out to individual requirements, as a rule. Both styles are very adaptable; the Spanish, in particular, seems able to ramble on, and yet look dignified indefinitely—patios, galleries, windows with grilles, doors with decorative metal bolts and bars and hinges, whole groups of subsidiary buildings, heavy, sedate, authoritative—nothing comes amiss to the Spanish model. The Colonial model is very much more formal; though adaptable and capable of much variation it demands a certain spaciousness, a sweeping elbowroom. The dignified pillared portico, with unlimited frontage each side of it, is symmetrical and noble-looking. I doubt if any country has more fruitful sources of inspiration for its present-day builders than







A LAKE (LUGANO) NOT AMERICAN STYLE

America, except, of course, England, where we carefully avoid transmitting any such nonsense as our past and gone architectural sources, unless they are labelled Tudor or Georgian, and those two labels cover a multitude of hideous sins, plain and coloured

American waterways, rivers, and lakes are mostly lacking in charm. Probably they are too big, the rivers too lacking in banks, the lakes too lacking in focus. They all have the look of being unloved, that they are conscious of being so much water, in everyone's way, water that must be dodged or bridged as quickly as possible. Once crossed or circumvented, one never thinks of them again. The Salt river in Arizona is an exception; one gazes at it with so much pleasure. But then—what a chance! That kind-faced river in a great desert; how can it help looking benignant? How can one help smiling back at it? But not all rivers, even in Arizona have that quality of kindness. Certainly not the Colorado, of Grand Canyon fame. That turgid opaque yellow stream goes rolling in the most menacing way through the very depths of the canyon, positively looking for mischief, one might say. I am informed that if one falls into it, clothed, the solids in the water lodge in one's garb so quickly that one inevitably sinks. The Mississippi is much the same, that is, in the thirteen mile wide stretch where I have most frequently looked on it; the immense width adds nothing but vagueness, one cannot easily believe in a further shore. No, the rivers by which I have been brought up bear no resemblance to these either in appearance or be-

haviour. Think only of the crystal clear blue Rhone, purest aquamarine, dashing out of Lake Geneva—soon it is true to be joined by the glacier-grey Arve, but so unwitting are they of each other that for a long way they race along side by side without mingling. Those are rivers, especially the Rhone. And our Severn—see its “bore” below Gloucester, as I did at two a.m. of a warm thundery night; utter stillness, then the murmuring, the swishing, the rumour, the strange breaking-up of serene reflections: then the passing of the great wave, heaving, irresistible; the rumour, the swishing, the far murmur. And then a little warm rain fell, very gently; there was a flicker in the sky of lightning, a distant melancholy growl of thunder. It only needed that Castor and Pollux should lean out from the clouds, expound the meaning of the dim night tragedy, and slowly vanish again. But they did not; it was a drama in the Greek manner, but all unexplained; each one might interpret it for himself. And I think of the Thames, again at two a.m., below Sonning, and in a backwater. Our little boat was covered in for the night, very neatly and completely. With difficulty, lifting the canvas cover at my side I managed to look out, and held my breath at the strangeness. A deep purple sky, an enormous orange full moon, quite low down, all but touching the thick edging along the bank of reeds and rushes which were a uniform no-colour, deep blackish bronze, utterly still and as lifeless as if cut out of metal. And the dark still water. It all looked as of a world never seen before by mortal eyes.

An hour later comedy looked in; we discovered that we were water-logged and in danger of sinking. To descend slowly and helplessly to the muddy bottom and stay there under our taut cover seemed not a good idea; we lost no time in freeing ourselves and scrambling ashore. I certainly never remember time going more slowly than on that morning till daylight came; all our clothing was wet, the morning was very chill. Later on, the lock-keeper not far away did what he could for us; we ourselves were in hiding most of the following day. And those hours from the dire discovery till the sun began to have a little warmth, and till the lock-keeper could in decency be awakened—unforgettable! When I think of lakes, of our Scottish Loch Katrine, Austrian Traunsee or Wolfgangsee, Italian Garda and Lugano, I feel warmth at the heart and a sense of flowering at the sight of their loveliness. No such sensations awake at the sight of an American lake. On the contrary, one feels that the Great Lakes are not lakes at all, they bear none of the true signs of lakehood on their plain faces, they are just—water *en masse*, and forbidding water at that.

At Chicago one need not be too conscious of the lake, there are so many other exciting features; but in summer it must be more to the fore, and of immense value as a tamer of the fierce heat which I believe pervades the city. We were in Chicago always in fierce cold, and a very cruel climate it showed itself to us. Our first arrival there was in the thick of an authentic blizzard—the train was some hours late, and we

gathered that we were lucky to get into Chicago at all that night. At the hotel we were blown, with a lot of driving snow, into the vestibule, only to find ourselves among one thousand business men, all smoking large cigars and thinking deep business thoughts. There seems to be nothing temperate about Chicago. It is a city for he-men and almost for he-women, one might say. Life runs swiftly, clamorously, raucously, and one has to lay hold with all one's powers, or be shot out into the void. Very interesting, but I should imagine exhausting, even to Americans. Milwaukee, Evansville, and many another American city were little more than names to us; a lecture from Himself was the reason of the visit, and in every cranny of spare time the intensely kind hospitality of America showed itself; but there was on the whole little opportunity for getting to know people and places during a lecture tour; journeys were long, and itineraries stereotyped—arrival, hospitality, lecture to as big an audience as could crowd into a hall or theatre (often with a huge overflow), departure. One could go on, stringing out names of cities. I will spare the reader.

And so, in preparation for the journey home, back to New York, that thrilling, stimulating city, so unlike any other in the world, so strangely beautiful in its own strange way, and even more beautiful each time one sees it. I should be terribly proud if I had been one of the makers of New York as we now see it—for it is entirely man-made. I remember it when the Woolworth Building was the one extravagant height, of

which everyone was talking! How that one idea has developed, how reasonably, orderly and stately the present-day buildings arise, making an incredibly beautiful picture as well as a useful and necessary structure for working in. Cass Gilbert, I think, was the architect who set it going with the Woolworth Building. He kindly offered to show us over it, but something untoward intervened. Nowadays it is hard to identify it among the many more gigantic erections.

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On one of the voyages that we made to America soon after the war, we carried three thousand troops back to their home, landing them at Halifax. The boat was ice-cold, to blow away influenza germs, we understood, and being terribly crowded, was not very comfortable. The bow was fitted with paravanes, for the catching of mines; during the second night out from England we lost our port paravane, but fortunately found no mines. Disembarking our troops at Halifax, I was grieved to see one soldier sitting lonely on deck, gazing out bleakly, in a brown study; no one had come to meet the poor fellow! When some jovial person on shore shouted up to him: "Welcome home! Come on, you old blue nose!" we felt overjoyed. And the cold at Halifax really seemed of a blue-nosed variety; I could not help being glad when we glided away from the forbidding place. Our visit was soon after a terrible explosion had occurred there; wrecks strewed the far shore of the inlet. It was altogether too far north for me, under February skies; too formidably

composed of snow, ice, and dark granite-like rock. I was indeed glad to reach New York, as exciting as ever, even though I was imprisoned in my room with a very serious cold for ten days. All I could do was to attend to the telephone, making and accepting engagements for Himself. Considering my state of health I was lucky indeed to make only one *gaffe* during that time. It was in the matter of a dinner invitation, and postponed by the intended givers of the feast, to a later date. Evidently I omitted to note the later date after crossing off the original one, or I concluded that a letter would arrive, re-inviting us, for unluckily it was a formal dinner. In any case I did not think about it again, and when the fateful evening arrived we had sallied forth to some other engagement, in perfect innocence! Very annoying for our intended host and hostess, however, and I was extremely vexed with myself. This was the kind of *horaire* through which one had to thread one's way daily in a stay of three weeks: 9 a.m., H. to breakfast; 9.45 a.m., drama journalist; 11 a.m., call on Belasco; 1 p.m., lunch with Professor Osborne at the Natural History Museum, and see museum; 4 p.m., newspaper syndicate interview; 4.30 p.m., S's to tea; 5.30 p.m., to tea with Miss N.; 8 p.m., dine and to opera afterwards with Mrs. P. But on other days there would be a lecture, or a reading, or a public function of some kind, which tired Himself far more severely. The occasion of that visit to the States was the Lowell Centenary, to which Himself had been invited as representative of English Letters.

Americans are excellent and lavish organisers of such affairs, and the elaborate functions entailed went off with smoothness and some *éclat*. After leaving New York Himself was involved in a fairly lengthy lecture tour, though not nearly as extensive as the lecture agent would have liked. Himself always stoutly resisted being hustled, and would never consent to dates and places that did not fall into a convenient sequence, geographically and chronologically. He would not cover the ground twice, and he would not undertake immensely long journeys if they could anyhow be avoided; an attitude in which I heartily concurred. A lecture, in general, was not a pleasure to him. He took it seriously, prepared it with great care, whatever the subject, was nervous beforehand, and usually fatigued afterwards. His voice, so quiet in everyday circumstances, was capable of surprising development, he seemed able to fill any sized hall once he had gauged its acoustics and requirements. Quite in line with his diffidence about himself is the fact that there was, nineteen times in twenty, an immense overflow audience to whatever sized hall had been taken for him; and this irked him too, for he hated to disappoint anyone. I have it in mind that his ideal audience was found at the Sorbonne in Paris. The subject of his lecture—on Expression—necessitated a good deal of slang, of dialect, of special English, one might say. But nothing daunted those young people; they followed his lead with lightning response; it was indeed in a most pleasant sense an electrically charged atmosphere—not



to be forgotten. On one occasion only, at Philadelphia, I remember a very empty house, the lecture had come into conflict, as to date, with a very great operatic attraction; I suppose this was the agent's fault. He had also, shortly before, very nearly put a fullstop to Himself's lecturing and all other activities, by letting an iron door of very great weight hit him on the side of the head, just as he was going on to the platform to lecture. This agent was an amiable young man and of the best intentions, but we did not find him very competent. So far as my memory serves Himself never profited personally by his lectures; the proceeds were always handed on to some charity for which he felt special sympathy—war time or no. I don't know why he felt like this; Heaven knows that lecturing cost him much time, trouble, and fatigue. Indeed, any kind of public speaking was a great effort for him, and in America the long journeys that lecturings and readings involved added to his burden.

As to the best way to tackle the journey across that American continent, it is hard to decide; we have tried it direct and been very tired at the end thereof; we have tried it breaking the journey at Chicago, Denver, Salt Lake City, and found it never-ending. By the southern route we have found a break at New Orleans inevitable. Trains are comfortable; food usually fairly good, especially when provided by one Harvey; the little so-called drawing-rooms—small private dens at the end of each car, with which we always provided ourselves—were an added comfort. But oh! the tedium—the

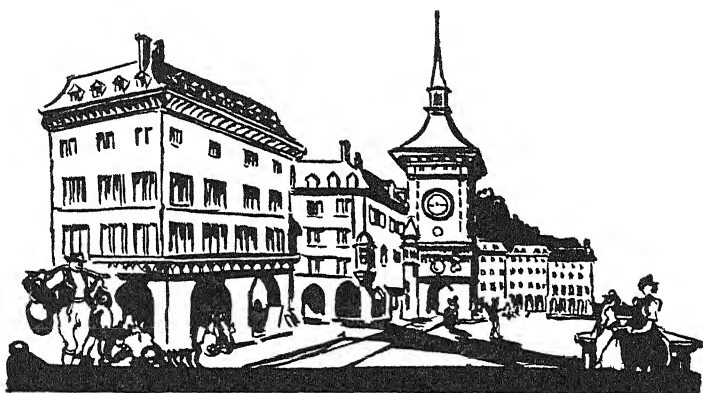
tedium! The country is so vast and in the main so strangely featureless that one may look out of the window on two consecutive mornings and gaze at what seems to be the same landscape. However, no doubt I have a jaundiced eye, being a specially poor traveller, and always hostile to the actual transportation of my carcase; hostile and very genuinely suffering. I have often found myself almost unable to walk, after days of a lurching, vibrating train. Americans, on the other hand, seem to welcome the delights of a railway journey; an added briskness comes into their manner as they climb on board, settle comfortably for a two or three hours' talk, say, with Himself, and disappear to take a train back again. I have wondered if they realize the amount of time they spend—I should not wish to call it waste—in railway and other travel. They bring their typewriters or business papers along, it is true, or indulge themselves in a hair cut, a manicure, or various domestic pastimes during a railway journey; sway down from New York to Washington for lunch and return to "little old New York" for the evening, and so on. I suppose it is all part of the modern attitude towards transportation—as the facilities for speedy travel increase, so do our commitments, so that in the end we gain no time, but lose much mental serenity, as it seems to me. One little detail of American railway travel I thoroughly enjoy: the large brass bell on the locomotive, which is operated at level crossings where there is traffic; and oh! marvel! operated by hand. These bells have a very pleasant reassuring tenor clang. I know of

a bell attached to a Roman Catholic church in a north London suburb, to which, if I were an R.C., I would present an American locomotive bell, and so earn the gratitude of a whole district which at present suffers from an acrid querulous clangster, only capable of producing an ache in the tumpkins of all who hear it.

Among the not so amiable Americans of whom I spoke earlier should have been placed the ticket supervisor on trains, not the collector, who is often an affable blade, but the elder man, who for some unknown reason always resembles an elephant, and follows so extremely closely on the heels of the collector. He is of a strongly marked type; his tight-lipped, small-mouthed, large-cheeked face does indicate rather too clearly that you, and still more the collector, are under suspicion; there is the double-double bass growl that we hoped we had left at the Customs, that air of "Will you go quietly, or must I bring out the handcuffs?" On one occasion we had rather an awkward experience with one of these gentlemen. Arriving at Buffalo in the very early morning, we disembarked rather too slickly, only to realize very soon that we were without our mileage tickets. The train had gone out again and the ticket men with it, bearing our tickets, which, by the way, they always love to cherish all night long, in every country. The reason the train officials give is that you shall not be disturbed in your slumbers, but my private opinion is that they have invented some elaborate gambling game in which tickets take the place of playing cards; the more unexpired mileage a

ticket shows, the higher its value as a card, no doubt. In any case, it took a great deal of intensive work to retrieve those tickets with about 1,000 miles of unexpired mileage, in time for our use on the train leaving Buffalo that night. Our visit to Buffalo was caused by a lecture engagement of Himself's; there was also a large luncheon party, after which he spoke as well. In the morning we had been motored out to Niagara, an excursion arranged by some kind friends. Himself had seen the great fall long previously; I am notably stupid about waterfalls. Having looked at water falling during, say, three minutes, I am visited by the feeling that: That's that. Like the acting of some of the nearly great actresses one knows of, in three minutes one has been made aware of the whole scope; there is nothing left to expect or hope. And so, for me, waterfall pleasure is very quickly over; it is a defect in my character, I know, that I should never remember these spectacles with any special pleasure. One exception to my stupid reception of falling water is the Staubbach in Switzerland, but then—the less waterfall it! A thin veil of greyish vaporous stuff, swaying from a cliff-top downwards and hardly reaching earth has very little of the normal fall about it.





## IX.—SWITZERLAND, AND AN INTERLUDE ON FOOD

SWITZERLAND in general we always took with mild transports; ye cannot serve both God (Tirol) and Mammon (Switzerland), apparently. Basle and Zurich were on the way to Tirol, Pontresina might be on the way home. Berne, Thun, Riffelalp, Montana we visited for their own sakes, and very good they are, as well as a longish stream of other Swiss resorts.

On my very latest visit to Berne I saw King Feisal sitting on the broad terrace of the handsome new hotel. He appeared to be one of the very few occupants of the enormous building. Ten days later it much surprised me to read that he was dead, and the cause was still more surprising, as reported in the Press. Taking a mere pleasure drive from Berne to Interlaken, his chauffeur had chosen a road leading over a pass at an elevation which Feisal's weak heart could not stand! As we ourselves had come a few days before from Inter-

laken to Berne on the plainest, flattest of roads, and not to be mistaken, this was the more mysterious. Why take a high road, and why did Feisal not order immediate return to the low one when he was incommoded by the high one? He did not die on the spot, but after a day or two of successive heart attacks.

As to the loveliness of Swiss landscape, I certainly recall two moments of supreme beauty. We had crossed the Grimsel pass and were coming down to the Rhone valley when, looking west, we caught a marvellous glimpse of the Weisshorn, alone, remote, deep rose against a very clear and very pale blue sky. At the Riffelalp again we caught a moment of supreme beauty. A black-blue night sky, the Matterhorn towering into it, and a young, very bright moon, swallow-shaped, flying towards the dark heart of him; difficult to think that they were not sentient and full of passionate intention, for the moment. At the Riffelalp we suffered from some very vile weather, and, our walking plans being entirely disrupted, we moved away to Montana, beloved of parsons. Truly there were many there, and among them one or two school friends of Himself, also a new and most genial acquaintance in Dean Storrs, at that time of Rochester. Walks were fairly good, but not really thrilling, and the atmosphere indoors was just a little alarmingly clerical.

Geneva, a haunt of my girlhood, Himself and I visited together several times. He was deeply interested in an attempt to improve the conditions of slaughtering for food in England, and Geneva was cited

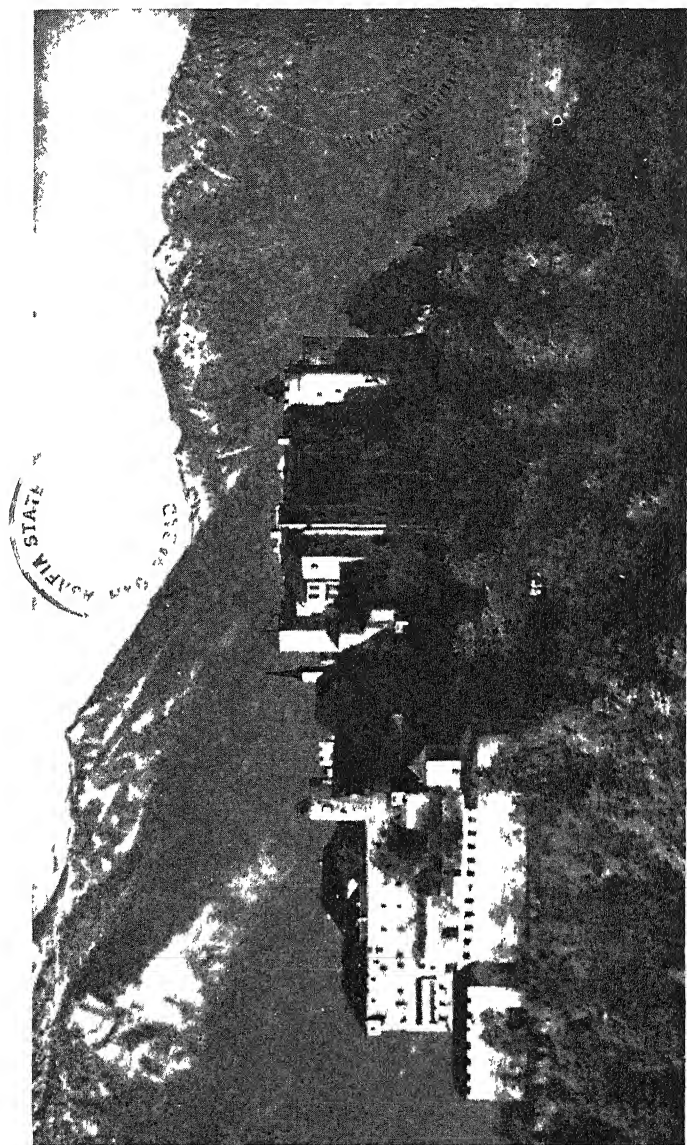
as one of the more enlightened spots in this very spotty reform. He never spared himself first-hand evidence, either in that or any other public work that he undertook, so that the visit to Geneva slaughter-houses produced the usual effect of nausea, and deep reflection, for what he saw there was far in advance of anything in England, but still capable of much improvement. On other visits to Geneva he was bound for the sittings of the Co-operation Intellectuelle at the League of Nations; there appeared to be too much intellect and too little co-operation, or was it contrariwise? for very little was ever achieved. Geneva is a pleasant place, however, and the old town, the cathedral, and the quite delightful terrace promenade, La Treille, on the hillside looking out towards the Grand and Petit Salève, are full of character and individuality.

At the end of the second series of conferences, Himself, exhausted by the heat and baffled by the ineffectiveness of the procedure, was tired out. I suggested motoring quietly the length of the lake and staying the night there before dashing back to London next day. The drive along the lake was restful and lovely, but Montreux looked so blistered, closed in, and unpleasant that we fled up the hills to Caux, where the air was sweet and Alpine, and sleep was blissful. It was a good move; indeed, I think it always pays to make a getaway, no matter how crucial the effort, in moments of great fatigue; I may be told that I was not the one fatigued, and that is true, but I still hold to my theory. The escape from telephone, interviewers,



photographers creates in itself an immediate tonic reaction. On two occasions I dragged Himself out of our much-loved Vienna with considerable difficulty. On the first occasion, on coming out of a theatre at which one of his plays was being given—one might see four Galsworthy plays at different Viennese theatres within a few nights just then—he was surrounded by such a huge and adoring mob of young autograph hunters that I had finally to enlist the sympathies of the police to extricate him. He had become quite invisible, and I really feared he had been accidentally thrown down; moreover, we were overdue for some other engagement. Then, lunching next day at our excellent Bristol, twenty-five volumes of Galsworthy were brought to our table, one by one, to be inscribed. And so on, and on, till he was utterly tired out. Then came a flying visit to Budapest, where we saw a most excellent performance of "Loyalties" in Hungarian. They seemed to have an immense natural gift for acting; it must have been a good translation, too, or it could hardly have gone so well. On our return to the Bristol at Vienna we found our bedroom already inhabited by a cameraman, large camera, and several assistants. I, always a bad traveller, felt almost inclined to burst into tears, and, although very politely included in the invitation to be photographed, I feigned deafness, retired to the bathroom, closed the door, and proceeded to remove the grime of travel. I also laid my plans. Eventually I persuaded the weary man that we would be well advised to take the night train from





SALZBURG, UNCHANGINGLY LOVELY

Vienna to Salzburg and join our London-bound train as it passed by next day. This we did, to our great contentment, sleeping not too badly on the train, and quite well for some few hours of the early morning at the Hôtel de l'Europe, Salzburg. Then we drove around the enchanting old city and the surrounding countryside, stepping on to our London-bound train in the late afternoon, quite refreshed in mind and body. On another occasion I insisted on the way from a P.E.N. Congress in Poland on our fleeing from tremendous heat in Vienna by motoring up to the Semmering (and the air was like heaven up there!), back again next day to lunch at our basely deserted but always welcoming Bristol, and on to our train, in a restored condition.

Vienna was always my favourite capital city since I first saw it at the age of seventeen; it has grown older and sadder since those great days, like all of us. One feature still surviving, I think, is Sacher's restaurant. In those very long-ago days there was an hotel above the restaurant, and there we stayed, mother, brother, and self; my mother had always the sound instinct to stay within hail of good food. And remarkably good it was there, even a not-greedy seventeen-year-old could appreciate that. In later days one's duty and one's pleasure in eating lay naturally at the Bristol; and, again, how good the food was! Another very attractive hotel with good food was the Adlon in Berlin; we made its acquaintance in 1909, and have been faithful to it ever since. In Paris I do not feel that we ever lighted

on anything supreme in restaurants or hotels, oddly enough; though many eating-places were to our liking, nothing stands out in memory. At Heliopolis, near Cairo, we found a magnificent hotel with very good food; the prawns there remain in my mind—double size prawns they were, barred in soft red and white bands of colour, like a Pharaoh's headdress; but I don't remember that their flavour was very remarkable. Sitting at tea one afternoon in the high-domed winter garden of that hotel, I was conscious of something falling with a tremendous thud on the brim of my large hat. I tried to behave like a little lady, gave one convulsive shake, and there was another slighter thud—on to the floor. Was it a lizard, a bat, a locust, a snake? I never knew, for in the dim shadows of that tea-table-studded floor the creature was utterly lost. I should like to know what it was that lost its balance in that high dome with its fretted woodwork! My hat must have broken its fall very comfortably. At Algiers the St. George hotel certainly did us proud with a special lunch ordered by Himself. I don't know if their everyday efforts corresponded to this, though one felt that the place had an air of well-being and knew what was what. But as to that, one must not be too sure of anything. At Estoril in Portugal we had the most terribly unattractive everyday food, but if we had the intention of giving a dinner party the head waiter undertook that we should have a very excellent dinner. We took his hint and made haste to give a dinner party as often as might be. Lucio never failed us. In the same un-

expected way in New York a now long-obsolete hotel, the Seville, recommended to us by William Heine-mann, gave us a most surprisingly fine special dinner. In later days we came to know the Hotel Chatham in that city as a place of excellent cuisine. But then again, one never knows as to American food. A cynical American acquaintance assured me that I had never tasted American cooking, whatever the food might be. There were only Swedish, Austrian, French, Italian cooks in America, and that as travellers we would probably, and he fervently hoped, never light on American cooking. The American dinner party menu, by the way, is strangely unvarying, though nothing could well be nicer: oysters large and very good; soup nearly always turtle, but occasionally clam; shad or shad's roe, the latter to be much preferred; roast turkey with unnumbered little and big gadgets and garnitures, supreme among which for me were the sliced sweet potatoes dipped in molasses and fried; then came the one variable course, the salad, made of a vast number of good things, from chicken to pears and apples and celery and cream cheese; then the ice-cream pudding, a big mountain of it—none of your neat little portions, but a monstrous erection from which an incredibly big helping is recommended, nay, insisted on, by your kind host. As to savoury or dessert, I fail to remember what they were, if any, being quite comatose by the end of the ice-cream pudding performance. A curious custom that I don't remember in any other country is the use of a different patterned dinner service for each and

every course. As formal dinners are apt to run large, and courses are from six to eight, one can only say: "‘Some’ store-cupboards for china!" My cynical American friend would have to admit that there is special American food, if no cooks; shad’s roe is peculiar to the States, and it is very excellent; all deficiencies in fish food are made good by the huge and delicious American oysters with their innumerable ways of being cooked; and some vegetables—the already mentioned sweet potato, various beans, sweet corn, and a few other specially nice greenery; I commend, too, the pickled fruits of the southern States. Then the breakfast cereals—many and excellent. Their strangest breakfast dish as sampled by me in fear and trembling consisted of rashers of bacon and slices of banana, all fried together. As for the sandwiches, the breads, the biscuits or crackers, the cinnamon toast, and, above all, that strawberry shortcake, these are beyond praise and very specially American, however much they may be making their way in Europe too. It must be fun living in a country which can produce strawberries all the year round, as, I suppose, taking the climates from Florida to Vermont, it can; in the same sense, what fun for American polo players, who have only to follow their climates to keep themselves and ponies fit and in practice all the year round. No wonder they so continually win against those whose polo grounds are seas of mud or hard frozen for much of the year.

To return to food. We found in Sweden that the

essential flavours of meats were more thoroughly and yet more exquisitely brought out than in any other country; the vealness of Swedish veal, for instance, is beyond compare; their cooking altogether was of a very pleasing kind. If only the drinks could be moderated! One's heart sinks at the sight of five wine-glasses always alongside one's plate, and they will be relentlessly filled in due course or courses if one does not see to it. And one does not like the sight of blazing dark eyes in the young men's ruddy, fair-skinned faces towards the end of a big dinner. But I dare say in Scandinavian countries it is very natural, perhaps necessary, to counteract the cold with a good deal of liquor.

The most difficult country for food is probably Morocco. Even the excellent Transatlantique hotels find it a problem—how to feed the traveller to his liking. The traveller, for his part, finds it best to eat as little as possible. The meats look as if they came from starveling animals cruelly murdered. Every drop of milk is boiled the moment it comes into the hotel. One is remarkably careful to avoid drinking water as water; but who shall say that Evian-labelled bottles contain indubitable Evian water in a thirsty country where everyone is asking for mineral water? No need to ponder the charms of salad, washed or unwashed; either kind is deadly dangerous. On our table in the very finest and best equipped Transatlantique stood a centre dessert dish filled with sticky sugary dates; on them for days reposed, quite unmoving, a large metallic-hued bluebottle. I have no doubt his feet

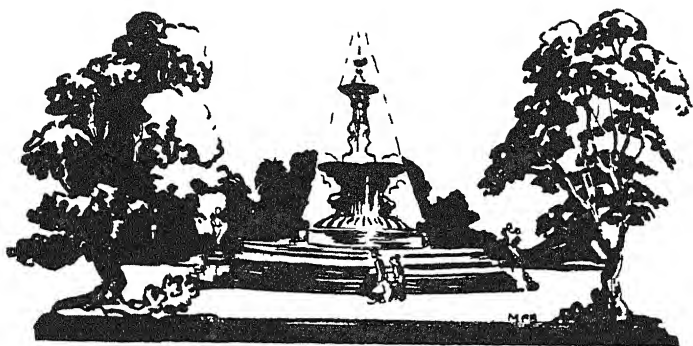


were fixed in the sticky sugar; it was a chastening sight, truly. And, in spite of all care and abstinence, one almost invariably contracts some sort of gastric trouble. However, one of the native dishes there was which inspired no vague doubts and fears—I hardly know why—it was *kous-kous*. It is served in an enormously large and deep bowl, large and deep enough to conceal whole pigeons, all that was visible being rice, exquisitely simmered and savoury, with meaty flavourings and titbits, pale golden in colour. It is certainly a remarkably good dish, the Algerian variety being even better than the Moroccan or Egyptian, we thought. And there were some delicious sweet dishes, usually prepared by the lady or ladies of the house in honour of the guests (I am speaking for the moment of private house cuisine), whom she may probably never see. In Egypt I spent one evening in a harem with the lady of the house and her daughter, a very lively and intelligent girl, or rather woman, of fourteen. The mother was already thirty, and considered quite old by her animated child. Both ladies were attired in violent peacock blue plush dresses, with worthless-looking necklaces composed of what I feel sure were rubies, sapphires, and emeralds thoroughly badly treated. The furniture was upholstered in bright red velvet with gilded wood frames; many a musical box stood around and was made to function for our pleasure. The lively daughter was interested in all sorts of “outside” subjects and problems, and one tried to ask intelligent questions in return, for she was very intelli-

gent. At the doorways between one room and the next stood a negro woman slave, immovable, statue-like. The serene old princess of thirty seemed a very amiable woman, but of little conversational powers. The daughter spoke very good French and quite good English; she played us a good deal of lively music on a distressingly bad upright piano of great antiquity. Her father, our host, clearly doted on his daughter; he sat beside her while she played, and they had a great intercourse with "nods and becks and wreathèd smiles." The girl had clearly been brought up on dangerously Western lines, and one wondered how she would fit in with the life that appeared to await her. I played a lot of English, Scottish, Irish folk tunes; "Scotch" appealed strongly to mine host, but I suspected that his interest was centred on "White Horse" or "Black and White" rather than on the folk tunes, Moslem though he was. In any case, he laughed most cheerily each time I prefaced a tune with the word "Scotch," and repeated the word with gusto. After ten o'clock it began to be rather heavy going for a stranger, and I was not sorry to say goodnight to the amiable princesses and rejoin the gentlemen, deserted at the end of dinner. There was no mistake about the harem as a secluded dwelling; even the master of the house had to wait while the formidable eunuchy-looking janitor unlocked the door of the harem with a truly enormous key and locked us in, and locked us out, later in the evening. Which brings me to saying that the amiable old princess, aged thirty, had made with her own fair hands

the sweet dish that evening for her husband's guests. It was very delicious, with honey as an ingredient.

On the whole, I would say that the three countries where one may be reasonably sure of good food and cooking are France, Austria, Sweden, and the three most remarkable for inferior food are Morocco, Portugal, Ireland. I am endeavouring to avoid the cosmopolitan hotel standards and to consider only those of an average home, or of a self-respecting inn fairly unaffected by the exigent traveller de luxe. Of Scandinavia I speak with less certainty because of the shortness of our visit and the fact that we dwelt on the higher levels in those countries as apart from the bourgeois cuisines in general.



## X.—SOUTH AMERICA, VOYAGES *v.* THEATRES

WE saw very little of South America. Wishful to avoid the English winter, we took ship for Rio, arriving on December 28 in the too-warm time of their summer. Although we came into port at a prosaic hour, 2.30 p.m., we were much impressed by the beauty of the harbour as seen from the captain's bridge. The outlines of the hills, however, had taken on such strange, uneasy contours that I was unable to give all my attention to the beauties. We had had a hint already, in passing the island of Fernando-Noronha, a Brazilian penal settlement, of this inclination of peaks to point in unwonted and unnatural directions; to the European eye these outlines were disquieting.

We had on board an ex-President of Brazil, and we learnt afterwards that an attempt on his life had been planned to take place during the landing at Rio. We should have been "in the stalls," so to speak, for the ex-President and family were next in front of us at the

gangway. However, in consequence of a violent thunderstorm which broke just as we docked, and the general *sauve qui peut*, ardour was damped and nothing untoward happened.

We made direct for the Copacabana hotel four or five miles out along the shore; it was comfortable, luxurious even, but the heat there and everywhere was so formidable that we began at once to wonder if we had chosen our time wisely. We wilted, for the very damp heat produced great lassitude, and unfortunately it was very much the same at night. Young Rio, of both sexes, had a way of coping with it; all day long in bathing dresses of the briefest and rope-soled sandals they strolled about. And magnificent they looked—bronzed, shapely, and at ease. Often one would see them emerge from some bathing pool, dripping, swarm on to a car and drive off, dripping; the extras, standing on the running boards, leaving a trail of wet dripping along the road. One would like to know a little about the statistics of rheumatism there, if any! After a few days we felt that the damp heat was too damaging to us, and took train up to Therezopolis, a pretty little resort 3,000 feet uphill. Here it was much more bearable, being drier. But the daily thunderstorm, lasting frequently several hours, with its truly tropical rain, divided one's day in rather an annoying way. Nothing to be done while the deluge lasted. No, there were too many small obstacles to enjoyment about life in Brazil; we rough islanders were a little peeved and irked at having to bow our heads to the daily deluge,

a little enervated by the heat. Yet we were by no means prepared to strip off clothes and do as Rio did; our pale skins would have surely evoked comment, and our pale constitutions would probably have evoked pneumonia. So, after a visit to Petropolis, the summer residence of the official world of Rio, but which we liked less than Therezopolis, chiefly because the main drain flowed apparently down the main street and smelled to heaven, we decided to shorten our stay in Brazil, and we returned to Rio to await a boat. During one of those sleepless nights attended by mosquitoes and great heat, Himself and I were standing at our window, gazing down into the harbour (for we had by then come to the hotel in the city), when we saw a big shark nosing about quite close inshore. The shark episode, interspersed with excursions round the room with the Flit apparatus, helped to pass the stifling night. Himself, not content with the effects of Flit in a syphon-like spray, swished and dropped the liquid about freely. I do not think the mosquitoes objected, but some of our suitcases were disfigured permanently by greasy stains. Pernambuco, where later on we called before leaving the mainland, whose harbour is said to be "full of sharks," provided us with no great thrill; we had seen all we wanted, at Rio.

One evening during the voyage homeward we had the disconcerting sight of a ship in the distance on fire. Nothing living could be aboard that furnace, and yet—and yet—how could one leave such a tragedy unexplored? Eventually one of our boats was launched and

went off to that dreadful crimson beacon, a ship that seemed in agony, turning this way and that, uncontrolled. Naturally, our men could not get very near because of the heat, but they made sure that nothing living could be on board. We heard later on that a Dutch ship had succeeded in taking off all the crew some days before we came on it; there had been no possibility of doing anything else but to leave the ship to burn itself out and sink. The only other experience we had of fire at sea was on the liner in which we were travelling from New York to Liverpool. When still about three days away from Liverpool, Himself and I were conscious of a tindery, unpleasant smell and of frequently flying bits of blackness, like black snowflakes, blowing past our porthole. However, we said nothing to each other nor to anyone else; I hardly know why. Naturally, at night, with the ship more closed in and cosy, the tindery smell became stronger. On our arrival off the south-west of Ireland we noticed a great number of boats passing with intention fairly near us, and greetings and signallings passed. At Liverpool we were disembarked very quickly, and the boat immediately moved off to some distant berth to unload. After we had landed and the secret was out, Himself confessed that once or more during the nights concerned he had slipped out of the stateroom and prowled about, following his nose, which led him forward. It appeared that coal bunkers were on fire, but that a constant watch had been kept. I am always amused to think of our stubborn avoidance of the

subject. After all, what good to speak about it while we were far from land? There was no mistaking the tindery smell nor the black snowflakes, but talking would not have helped in the least; indeed, would have made the unpleasant state of things far more real.

After Brazil, Lisbon looked almost homelike. At Mont Estoril and up in the sweet-smelling woods and hills inland we found again our bee-orchid, our deep gentian-blue lithospermum, our purple flag-iris in thousands, our rosy heaths; we had no regrets for the tropical orchid of Brazil, the toads as big as cats, the occasional snakes, the daily thunderstorm—nor even for the mountain-tops tilting so perversely the wrong way, as if demented as well as hunchbacked. On the voyages both out and home we had many Argentines as ship-companions; curiously obtuse they were. They would think nothing of settling down round and about Himself, who was visibly trying to write, family by family, each with its gramophone in action; they would call across to each other in this pandemonium, apparently oblivious of anyone in between. No, certainly not a well-bred race—raucous of voice mostly, and quite without regard for all that was not labelled Argentine. Very quarrelsome, too, among themselves, and over the merest trifles. Was there a competition, a tournament, a committee on which teamwork was needed: Miss Argentine boiled up to a certainty, failed to appear, complained, refused, made herself conspicuous in a thoroughly unpleasant way, and enjoyed doing so, apparently.



It is rather the mode to turn up the nose at deck games and competitions. To my mind, anything that relieves the immeasurable tedium of life on board ship deserves profound gratitude. And deck tennis counts first amongst the games because it is the liveliest. The rope ring, made by an expert sailor, perfectly smooth and without apparent join, covered in soft chamois leather, is a delicate and superior weapon; with its intelligent flexibility much can be done, both artfully and craftily, beyond what can be accomplished with the insensitive rubber ring sold ashore with deck tennis outfits. An evenly matched doubles with a sailor-made rope ring can almost persuade me that I like being at sea. Deck quoits is another good pastime, though my chief memory of that game is disconcerting. Happening to hear from two gossiping entrants to a coming competition (neither of whom knew me by sight) that "Mrs. G.? Oh, she's top hole, I hear!" I naturally burned with ardour for practice, knowing myself to be very far from top hole; so, securing some quoits, a distant stretch of deserted deck, and the company of Himself, I set to work. But the sea was becoming rougher every minute, and my feelings were becoming wilder and weaker as we rose and fell to the ship's motion. Trying harder and harder, I natheless sent three consecutive noble rubber discs out to sea in exactly the same spot; after the third aberration I fled to the seclusion that the cabin grants. There certainly must have been something of mental cross-eye about this peculiar performance—perhaps it was even physical

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2. 1/2" x 1/2" x 1/2"  
3. 1/2" x 1/2" x 1/2"  
4. 1/2" x 1/2" x 1/2"  
5. 1/2" x 1/2" x 1/2"



DECK SPORTS AT SEA : CARSLAKE "UP"

cross-eye! Judging by my feelings, I could quite believe it. . . . Table tennis, too, deserves our gratitude; it has not the true deck game flavour, and is played in an indoorish recess sheltered from the wind, but it is a good pastime.

The culminating event on a long voyage is the fancy-dress ball and competition for prizes. I remember being asked to act as one of three judges in this event, and my very dubious feelings about a problem in this connection have never been set at rest. All three judges were happily agreed as to the first prize—a Gretna Green couple most admirably carried out in eighteenth century costumes by two maids of two of the passengers; naturally they were clever with the needle and they had put together a charming drama in cotton of a pair of runaway lovers—"cabriolet period." When it came to the next decision all was far from simple. A young person paraded for our inspection; very good-looking, slender, wide of shoulder, narrow of hip, white-skinned, Eton-cropped hair, no sign of shaving on the smooth cheeks; a low-cut very modish amethyst velvet dress draped his slim body, fine silk amethyst stockings and high-heeled satin shoes to match—he was the perfect mannequin! Added eyelashes, rouged cheeks, crimson lips and nails certainly gave one grave discomfort, but were they not all part of a mannequin's get-up? certainly they only perfected the careful and most elegant toilet. To my uneasy mind that was in all honesty the second prize; but it was another matter to record and stand by one's conviction. Our captain was

known to be decidedly strait-laced; there were many orthodox elderly folk of high degree among the passengers. So far as my memory serves the perfect mannequin did not receive the second prize. I have often wondered what one ought to have done, but never arrived at a decision. One may say, what luck that we were judges three! Yet that is but a cowardly get-out, not a solution. The later day fashions in sexes had not then, 1925, become so familiar and unremarked as they are today, but it was long enough after the Great War for one to realize that times were changed and sexes with them! That the Great War is responsible in the main for these sex vagaries, cannot be doubted, I think. Quite brutally and frankly speaking, during the four years of war men were short of women, and women short of men—a fact which was bound to have very far-reaching consequences. Variations and complications, old as humanity, raised their diminished heads again, and who can wonder at it?

Far easier to look on such a state of things as this without shock than to admit—as I have been asked to, in quite another connection—that, in all seriousness, one should realize that corrugated iron is the true expression of art in our time. Ferro-concrete is quite enough for an antique like myself to swallow—but corrugated iron, that vilely unfertile makeshift—never! We are told that genius arises and the whole world is made new, but until I see genius transforming corrugated iron into, say, a lovely house, or any other structure that can carry the seal of permanence, of

dignity, of suitability, I will remain an unbeliever, not even keeping an open mind, for once.

Our holidays and the call of the theatre were always liable to clash. It was very hard to leave some sunny haven in winter, to race home for early or late or dress rehearsals; to look over the ensemble of a company just setting off to, say, America; to deal with some staggering and unexpected change of cast, or unholy feud; but it had to be done. Often Himself would leave me basking in the warm sunny south, and be there and back again before one could be much aware of it, for he, too, loved the sun beyond reason, and hated to leave it.

From "The Silver Box" onwards, we both suffered acutely at first performances of his plays. I recall that I was so submerged in nerves at the first of the first play ("The Silver Box") that I did not hear one word spoken on the stage until well into the second scene; or, rather, I heard, but without making sense of it. At the first night of "Justice" there were two tense moments, calculated to occupy all one's attention. We were sitting in an unaccustomed place, the stage box on the left. During one scene I became conscious of an unmistakable smell of fire; very fortunately I caught the eye of one of the orchestra who was in a position to inform me in dumb show that—oh! horror—I was perfectly right. By a movement of his hand he was able to indicate that flames were flickering up somewhere within his observation, "off." Naturally I never took my eyes off him. Presently the watchful hand indicated "Down, down, down!" and I never was more

glad in my life, for it would be a terrible responsibility to decide at what moment a move is right and necessary in the matter of a theatre fire. The second incident that evening was the utter refusal of the audience to disperse until they had greeted the author of a play that had profoundly impressed them. For twenty-five minutes they kept it up, and I felt it to be unmannerly and ungrateful that they, all heated with enthusiasm, should have to hear that the lights were going out and that they must go home to bed. Very quenching! But it was perfectly true that the author was no longer in the house; he never could face those moments on first nights. And for that reason he was also unaware of a serio-comic scene at the end of "Escape's" first night. The audience was dispersing in very pleased mood when a woman's voice, rather raucous, arose: "My grandfather was murdered in the streets of Dublin," by which time I regret to say a ribald and mirthful reaction had been created in the departing audience. Each time the woman tried to make herself heard, she got no further than "My grandfather . . ." when a fresh gale of laughter drowned her voice. I always have a very grateful memory of one of our most eminent young men of the theatre whom I saw striding over row after row of the dress circle seats towards this brawling woman, and doing his best to persuade her to go. It seems that this was not the first occasion on which she had aired her "King Charles's head," and she had made up her mind that Galsworthy was, in this play, defending or justifying a murderer—a monstrous mis-

conception, of course. But after fortifying herself, she had the habit of setting forth for any first night that she thought might suit her purpose, and "My grandfather" was her orthodox opening. Why just those two words should have seemed so comic, I don't now, but they did, just then.

One other theatre incident, in which I was most discreditably concerned, occurred at a "Strife" *matinée*. Like most women in those days I was burdened with a big flower-trimmed hat, which on my taking it off, called for a hat peg; and that was provided most admirably by hat-pinning the large affair to the back of the upholstered chair in front of me. This I was doing when the long sharp hatpin slipped past some internal woodwork and pierced the spine of the male occupant of the stall in front! He leaped angrily as well he might: I, gibbering with fright, apology and nerves, gave, I believe, the impression that I was giggling, which was very far from the truth. The victim was attended by a doctor during the next interval, and seemed to grow angrier after that. This gruesome story somehow leaked out, and Don Roberto (Robert Cunninghame Graham), who loved a touch of the "Spanish temperament," never ceased to ask me if I had "done any execution with my stiletto lately," when we met, which was at infrequent intervals.

Our journeyings to Cologne, to Vienna, to Budapest to take part in first nights of translated plays, I have briefly mentioned. I remember in particular one arrival at Vienna, when, very tired after the 30-hour



journey, I asked for a hot bath as soon as I arrived at our hotel. The chambermaid informed me that the bath could not be heated because of arrangements for dinner cooking, but that I could certainly have one next day! Whereat, I wearily unpacked my rubber travelling bath, which at that time I never failed to take with me, and obtained a big can of hot water. But those were long-ago days. Best of all the Continental play-productions that we saw was that one of "Loyalties," in Hungarian, at Budapest, but finest of all far-distant performances in English was "The Mob," in New York, at the Neighbourhood Playhouse. It is amazing what life, intensity, and moving effect the play had as given there; although the Neighbourhood was a repertory theatre there was no stemming the tide of enthusiasm; "The Mob" ran for some weeks, against repertory rules, and I am always glad to think we saw it. "The Skin Game" in New York was fairly good, though not so good as the London production; "Old English," on which we chanced at Indianapolis, was, of course, with George Arliss in the title rôle, excellent; "Justice," with John Barrymore as Falder, we were unfortunately unable to see. It appears to have run for an immense time in New York and on the road afterwards, and to have made a very big impression.

Dealing with continentally trained actors and actresses was not always easy; on one occasion a leading lady burst into passionate sobbing at dress rehearsal, because she was (very tactfully and carefully) asked not to make her first entrance in a certain play at the very

topmost note in her register, leaving nothing to work up to for the rest of the performance. I presume such a comment on her technique had never before been made; she threw up her part and left the theatre. Whereon what I suspect to have been a well-trying plan was pursued. With regret she was informed that Fräulein X (a hated rival) was quite prepared to take the leading rôle, and at once the lady renounced her renouncement. She had very good notices too, which she certainly did not deserve. On another occasion the leading man, though very far from being the usual temperamental actor, suddenly gave way to despair, announcing that he could not go on. This happened at the last rehearsal before the dress rehearsal. The trouble was that the actress cast for the very passive rôle of his stage wife gave him nothing to "act up against," as he expressed it. Great and general consternation; a hurried search for a more likely partner, a hasty change made in the cast, and, improbable though it sounds, all went very well on the first night, thanks to a brilliant assuming, at very short notice, of the rôle. So there is such a thing as active passivity, at any rate on the stage, for the first lady had been simply nil, and that is no good. It was an object lesson to me.

The theatre is usually looked on as a whole-time job while it lasts, and yet how many other interests and duties Himself would undertake and share with it—the writing of a novel (which a new play would not entirely interrupt), a short story or article required by somebody, a lecture or reading or after-dinner speech, all

these three taking severe toll of his nervous system. Quite probably, too, he would be in the depths of a crusade, as I called them; they were chiefly on behalf of animals, and in this kind of work there was an immense amount of investigating and verifying to be done, at first hand, before he made the slightest statement. Yes, the day's work included many and divers threads, all needing the best and closest attention.



## XI.—THE HOME ISLANDS

I HAVE often wondered what Himself and I would have thought of England if we had not been, as we both were, completely English; an idle wonder, no doubt, but not idler than many other thoughts. When one returns to England from France, let us say, stepping down from the spacious, high-set, delicately drab-upholstered carriages of the Nord, and so soon afterwards steps into a train at Dover, low, rather cramped-looking, not giving a damn for appearances, smelling of carbolic, linoleum, and tunnel-smoke, almost grimy, certainly dingy, clammy, and dark, one does feel suddenly that one has entered a smaller country, physically even very small to have bulked so large in the world's history. And if we two had happened to be Latins, how could we have endured the English temperament? That friendly, smiling, unambitious, unassuming manner so lacking in panache and tenue, would surely have aroused our Latin desire to stick pins into these slow, simple-seeming islanders, would get beyond con-

trol, in our determination to see the blood flow quicker in, or out of, the British. I am convinced that there is in almost every other nation more instinct for putting fine goods in the shop window, a desire to impress, a national vanity, that makes them despise those without that form of vanity (though that is not the name that they would give it). Yet, our manner and our methods, as it happens, are only different, not in the least inferior; we are neither stupid, nor "perfidious" in my humble opinion—only very, very different. And that is no crime, though disconcerting and misleading to others. It certainly gives rise to an underestimate of these "rough islanders" by nearly every foreigner—which is a pity. It makes for a slight irritation against us from the very beginning; and the consciousness of having misjudged is added up against us, instead of against themselves, as it ought to be.

The most important islands in the world, to us two as British, never gave us the cramped feeling I have spoken of already—that London was overlooking Bristol, Edinburgh criticising Glasgow, nor even that Dublin was hobnobbing with Limerick across the way.

Our first visit to Ireland together was in 1911, and we made straight for Killarney after landing; very soon we began to sample the joys of an outside car and an Irish driver. On one of our leisurely jaunts through the country we came upon a most charming sight. A little dancing floor—just a square of carefully laid planks in a deep bay by the roadside, was thick with young men and girls, most beautifully neat as to clothes

and hair, dancing seriously, religiously one might call it, to the music of a fiddle, played by an old man raised above the crowd on a block or stool. The young people were very silent; no giggling or squeezing or love-making of any kind, that one could see. The atmosphere seemed really one of religious ecstasy, touched by intense enjoyment too great for speech, as the slight throbbing, sliding sound of expert feet reached our ears. Very striking, and different from anything I had ever seen of young people dancing. On another jaunting car drive we saw in the half-distance a real Irish funeral; scores, perhaps a hundred vehicles of every kind winding slowly along a road; it was a sad, flattish landscape and the effect was curiously melancholy and—different.

We walked through the Gap of Dunloe, escorted most of the way by the wildest rag-tag of young men on the wildest of raw-boned young horses; they did not succeed in shouting us into trying or buying their half-broken steeds. The lakes are lovely, and romantic; they did not, for all that, give me quite so much joy as a Scottish, or Austrian, or Italian lake. The Killarney hotel had a spurious air of superiority; it was not really good at anything. We did not, however, see any incident quite so disturbing as that reported by an English friend of ours. He was sitting at lunch there when he noticed a nearby waiter taking the table-napkin hanging over his arm and using it as a handkerchief! Our friend, controlling his lunch with difficulty, left by the next train and fled back to England.

From Killarney we went on to Killaloe, pausing at Limerick between trains; a very sad, squalid place it showed from the jaunting car drive we took through the city. At Killaloe on the Shannon, I regret to say, fleas were so lively that I think I heard them barking as well as biting during the night. Such a merry crew! Next came Recess, in Connemara, and that seemed to us set in a truly Irish landscape. One could feel, and almost see, the Little People around. We were guided up an adjacent hill by a "natural" youth, and he told us that he had often seen them. In any case, there was a lovely outlook from the top of that hill, out to sea—a quiet sunny sea, with countless islands. Next in our journeying came Larne and Cushendun, and the great surprise—the beauty and grandeur of the coast road from Larne westward, for which we were entirely unprepared. At Cushendun we have made more than one very happy stay with friends; time passed only too quickly. We jaunted to Cushendall to enjoy the real thing—a travelling circus in a tent smelling of sawdust and oranges and of horses in stables and warmth. We motored to the very strange Giant's Causeway, crossing a lonely moorland country where the signposts directions were in Gaelic. During a stroll up Glendun I remember a very touching little picture. In a deep recess of the road was a rock-built, breast-high altar, backed by bushes, trees, and rocks. On either side were trees, and across and across were stretched cords above our heads, on which fluttered rags "for remembrance," votive offerings; all very simple and Pagan

rather than Christian. I think Anatole France would like to have seen this; one might well believe, after that, the story that "Apollo was seen somewhere in Upper Austria as late as the fourth century A.D." Perhaps he took to Antrim as a haven, later still.

And then came the railway strike in England, and for some perverse reason we felt that we ought to be at home, in case of developments, I suppose. Off we went to Stranraer, spending one night there, and started next morning for London by motor-car, after some difficulty in finding a driver who knew enough about journeyings and roads. It seemed an incredible time before we were out of Scotland, but we did eventually arrive for the night at Borough Bridge, on the Great North Road, having crossed the Pennines under a most glorious wild sky at sunset, which made us think of Emily Brontë with more than usual love and sympathy—that sky and she were so akin. On again south next morning; and after several preliminary warnings our engine refused to go any further so near the end of the journey as Hatfield. Feverish tinkerings, taking about an hour, and we resumed the road, reaching home rather deflated, as well we might, for we had learned at Grantham that the railway strike was over!

About Scotland I have always had a slight feeling of inferiority, having been reared on seasons at Homburg, while Himself had been reared on shooting boxes, minor castles, and plenty of grouse shooting year by year in Scotland. It is a prouder thing to be a very good shot, as he was, in spite of bad eyesight, than to have



sat and watched all the great tennis players of their time in tournaments at Homburg. But the Dohertys, Wilding, Gore, and many another were good to see. My memory even leaps back to my teens, when I knew the Renshaws, though not at Homburg. I feel sure I watched Miss Lottie Dod, too; whenever I see that remarkable picture of her and her petticoats playing tennis, an unmistakable memory awakes in me. Very many years later Himself and I paid happy visits to Scotland, and even after his conscience had bidden him give up shooting entirely, the days were still very happy, for his nature, once having sanctioned such a decision, would never irk him by looking back and hankering after lost joys. Edinburgh, gay and gallant picture for travellers (though, I suspect, not so gay to live in), has always been on my beauty list of cities. Fez, Salzburg, Edinburgh lead the way, followed by a whole host of lesser lights such as Prague, Budapest, Innsbruck, Bolsano, Bratislava.

At Pitlochry I remember some good walks: Through the Pass to Blair Athol; up Ben y Vrachie, and down by another route; to Braemar, a glorious walk over the Spital of Glenshee, when grouse sat on tussocks of heather and gazed at us, knowing us to be harmless. And at Fortingal more good walks, among which I recall the long easy ascent of Schiehallion, with its precipitous descent to the loch on the other side. To come down the easy plain slope up which we had climbed seemed a little unenterprising, and we broke away abruptly downhill soon after leaving the top. It

was not a good move, for boggy bits and small streams abounded. Crossing one of the latter I slipped, found myself on my back, with most of the very lively brook racing up my two sleeves—a very odd feeling.

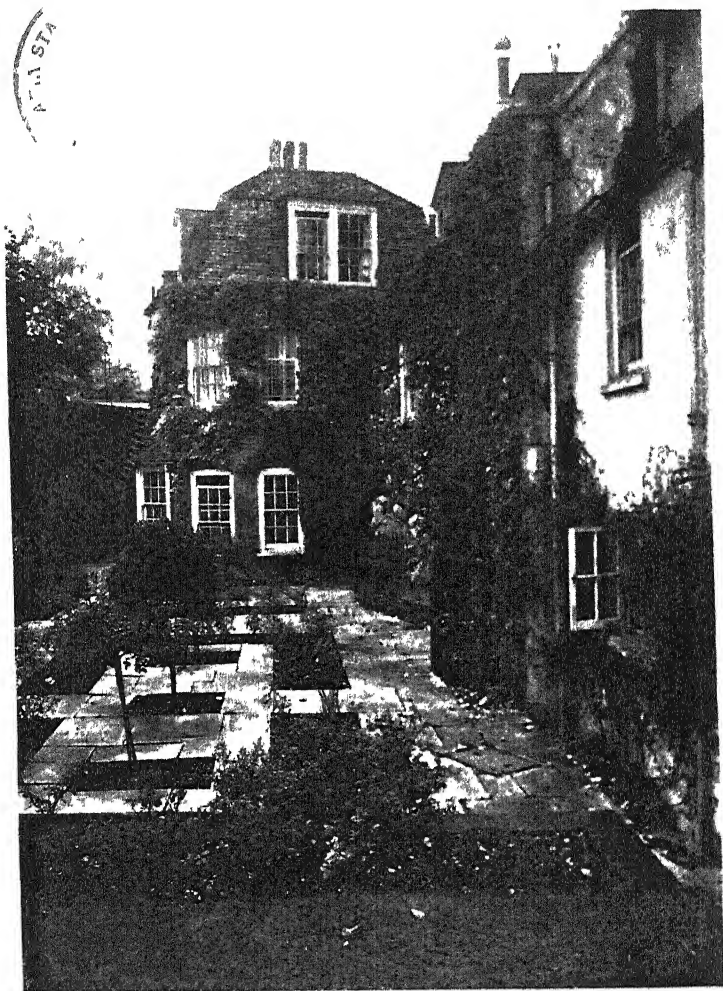
Strathpeffer, a likely-looking spot for walks, proved on closer acquaintance to be much too hampered with barbed wire for our liking. There were consolations—such as listening to Mrs. Kennedy Fraser and her daughter Patuffa singing Hebridean songs, a pleasure we were always ready for if it came within hail. We were also consoled by the acquiring of what proved to be an everlasting tweed overcoat for Himself, of beautiful material, beautifully fitted and beautifully finished; also a pair of heavy shoes for me, almost equally indestructible—both specimens of the best old Scottish handiwork and standards; the kind of work so rare and good that one has it or the memory of it for half a lifetime.

On a later visit we stayed at Birnam (see W. Shakespeare) close to Dunkeld. Very bad weather dogged us, but we were cheered by unlimited Scottish raspberries, having said goodbye, before coming north, to the last of English raspberries. So, though I fervently agree, on the whole, with the saying: “Why go north if you can go south?” Scotland is a thoroughly good exception to this rule. From Birnam we journeyed to Inverness; pouring rain there, and no chance of getting any idea of the town. Next day we motored along the Caledonian Canal, crossed it, went cautiously through Glencoe, where there was then not much in the way of

a road, turned south, ran along Loch Lomond, and being a little ahead of time, thought it would be pleasanter on the road than in the train, to Glasgow. But alack! every Glasgow hotel was full; telephoning to Edinburgh and Carlisle had no better result; finally we found shelter at Stirling, in a very modest railwayish inn. Making the journey to the English lakes next day, we were again unlucky in the weather; colouring which should have charmed us by its delicacy was either hidden in mist, or looked insipid and washed-out after the intense colouring of Scottish lochs and hills. Mem: To visit the Lakes again some day, not coming from Scotland but straight from the south, with eyes properly attuned to delicacy and smallness.

Journeys in the Home Islands are so short that they hardly seem to come under the heading of travel. Yet, what other land in all the world can compare with ours in intimate charm and variety and appeal?—its ever-changing, innocently lovely countryside and villages, hills, and running streams, with a touching, deep-rooted life of their own; far from courting the gaze of the passer-by they nestle, unconscious of their beauty. How long will this be so? All over the south of England landmarks appear and disappear overnight! Little bungalows with scarlet roofs and white walls seem thrown at random from some pettish child's hand; near London as well as in London immense blocks of flats diminish the sky and rob us of our breathing space; good old houses are torn down to make way for—with luck—good new houses, but always the new ones en-





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croach a little on our skyline and space; always they are more oppressive than that which they replace.

Our homes in London were, firstly, in Addison Road, from 1905 to 1913. Our small garden, being backed direct by Holland Park, was visited by many birds not usually connected with London: Cuckoos without fail, lordly cock pheasants, continual owls, and so on. In 1913 we journeyed to a flat in Adelphi Terrace House, where we lived till October, 1918, when we trekked to Grove Lodge, Hampstead. At Adelphi Terrace House we spent many air-raid nights in the basement, in the company of our friend J. M. Barrie. He had at that time a most portentous cough, which made the noise of falling bombs quite trivial. He also, in his kindness, would take the two small children, a girl and a boy, of the housekeeper, one on each knee, and weave delicate fairy tales for their comfort and distraction. The little girl, however, was of a severely practical disposition, and no matter how absorbing and delicate a fantasy was being invented for her pleasure, at the sound of a bomb would loudly ejaculate: "I'll kill that old Kaiser!" The little boy was more amenable.

In Devon Himself and I found satisfaction and plenty of breathing space; it was the land of his forefathers, and both north and south Devon bear traces of them.

From Bideford in the north we once made off inland on a tour of enquiry, to Buckland Brewer, and again onward, in search of some of his roots. We found a

little lonely high-lying moor labelled on a signboard: Gaulzery Moor, and in one corner of it a little farmhouse, very old, which we knew to be woven into his family history. Long before we got back to Buckland Brewer a big yellow moon was up, and here and there a white faced cow (a Hereford, but what was a Hereford doing in North Devon?) showed rather startlingly in the uncertain light. It was a magical evening, and a magical walk.

As to Dartmoor, from Okehampton on the north to Ivybridge on the south, from Moretonhampstead east to Tavistock west we had good reason to know the highways and byways of the moor. We lived at Manaton, eleven miles north of Newton Abbot, from 1918 to 1923, and at every season of the year found it lovely. It is the only bit of England that can at all recall the splendour and intensity of colour of the Scottish highlands. Often in winter, on days of deep blue sky and tawny fern underfoot, and at the first burst of heather-blooming in July the moor can look Scottish—with a difference. One cannot quite recreate the special smell of Scotland; the heather is there, but there is no snuff nor spiciness, nor the other mysteries of the best Scottish air; there is more fainting honeysuckle sweetness, it is true.

Few diversions came our way on Dartmoor—very good for the soul of the writer were those spells of quiet and freedom, broken only by such guests as did not mind simplicity of living. The long rides, the long walks, bird songs, farm sounds, the pageant of the

seasons and their attendant events—lambing, sheep-shearing, hay harvest, *the* harvest, cider-making, threshing, all these simple things kept one in close touch with the earth, and were precious to us. An occasional cricket-match, a race-meeting, athletic sports, a concert of local talent, were often more enlivening than intended. A normal day's programme for summer would be: Writing for Himself and gardening for me from breakfast to near lunch-time. Then we would set forth on our horses for an hour's ride perhaps, and having found a likely spot for our Spartan picnic, we tethered the horses and had lunch. Then came the more serious riding; home towards tea-time, baths, tea, correspondence and miscellaneous duties and pleasures, dinner, and then to a certainty—music, while Himself corrected proofs, read, or did secondary literary work—not creative, that is to say.

We had a marvellous upright Bechstein piano, never sick or sorry; not even a bad attack of moths in the internal felt seemed to disturb it. The moths, however, had to be disturbed, indeed severely ejected, probably for their own good. Besides Himself and perhaps some long-suffering guest or two, I had as audience on the verandah outside the french window a dog or two, sometimes a toad, and occasionally a hedgehog—this last did not appear on doggy nights. I hoped they all liked Bach, Brahms, and Chopin as much as we did. At ten o'clock various drinks were brought in, the most favoured of which, for a time, was yerba maté. On one occasion our farmer's wife



reappeared, bearing in her hand a dark, highly polished silver-mounted half coconut, together with a long, thin silver tube and mouthpiece. She said nonchalantly: "This is how we used to drink maté out in the Argentine—hand it from one to another. Dirty, I call it!" Our fancy had never soared beyond maté in a teapot, and we were duly impressed; conscious, too, of how small the world is. Another experience of a similar nature befell me about that time. During a previous visit to the United States, while staying at Santa Barbara, California, the whim had taken me to order a highly decorative Mexican saddle, built for me, and have it shipped in due course to our Dartmoor home. There, in my very tropical-looking gaberdine divided skirt, rather romantic-looking soft felt hat, and strange-looking saddle I set forth, hoping, I dare say, to make a small sensation. Meeting a farmer acquaintance, I pulled up and said: "Ever see a saddle like this, X?" "Yes, m'm; I used to use 'em when I was out in Texas," said the simple farmer. The Dartmoor folk, like the Tirolers, go about the world a good deal, and are not so simple as they seem. In general I think the Dartmoor character is a little misleading—so very forthcoming and affable on the surface, but with a good deal of granitic rock underneath. Nor did we ever remark the titanic passions which one writer friend discovers in the moor-dwellers. The only thriller we lived through, I think, in our village, was connected with a couple who quarrelled violently when the husband was drunk, which happened increasingly often.

He was an amiable fellow, but in his cups he would chase his wife out of their cottage on to the village green at dead of night—she in her nightdress; and we began to fear that his threats of murdering her would come true, for she had on one occasion had to twist a knife out of his hand, and her nerves were giving way. After many talks the husband came to agree with us that the best solution of the problem was for him to get away—to go to Australia where he had relatives. I was by way of undertaking most of the arrangements, for both Himself and I sensed the possibility of village gossip. We took his passage, and he went, but I fear the Australian solution was not too good a one, from what we heard later, and need I say that we did not escape village gossip? Nor an abusive letter from the wild one's mother, who was convinced that we had spirited away her boy for our own base motives.

In the very early days of motors on the moor we hired a car to take us to Okehampton to meet a sister of Himself's, who was coming there by rail. Before we had gone four miles on our winding, narrow road we met, head on, round a pronounced elbow in the road, another car. I am convinced that neither chauffeur hooted, so sure was each that his was the only vehicle of its kind on that unlikely road, even perhaps on Dartmoor. Himself was undisturbed, I had a battered hat, having butted the back of the driving seat, the chauffeur's index finger was broken. As to the opposing car, a pretty young woman, sitting beside the chauffeur, shot from her seat and landed, still in a

sitting pose, in the road. Unfortunately, a sharp flint flew up and hit the bridge of her pretty nose; it bled; no damage to the other occupants, nor to their chauffeur. Having done our best for nose and finger, we transferred our chauffeur to their car and directed them to our home at Manaton. Himself and I strolled back by sundry footpaths known to us, leaving our derelict and unmovable car by the roadside. By the time we got home the shaken and wounded had rested, recovered, and gone their ways. But our sister was still in the blue, and Himself, riding out in the afternoon on the same road, in the hope of meeting her, had no luck. She arrived, however, at 9.30 p.m. in high spirits and a high dogcart, having patiently waited for us at Okehampton, and finally hired the only available vehicle. The roads on the moor in those days were rough, narrow, and winding for the most part. One road, which ought to have been forbidden for horse-drawn vehicles, came down very steeply from the top of Hayne Down to our home. On it one afternoon there occurred a more serious accident than that just spoken of. Some holiday-makers, in considerable grandeur, in a hired heavy landau and pair, were being driven down this road by an elderly man. Either the brake slipped or a horse stumbled, the pair bolted and presently fell, the poor old driver being jerked from his seat over the horses' heads, was pierced in the back by the pole. The occupants of the heavy landau were quite unharmed. Some farm hands, seeing the dreadful tangle of horses and driver, ran to assist. After

directing the holiday folk to our house, they got the poor wounded man into a vehicle and eventually down to Bovey Tracey hospital, five miles away. Meanwhile a substantial tea was offered to the much-ruffled holiday-makers, during which, to my consternation, the youngest member of the party, a girl of about thirteen, suddenly gave an exhibition of hearty whooping cough! Apart from that contribution to the gaiety of the party, almost the only remark made was, "We might ha' been killed!" repeated several times in very condemnatory intonations by the various grown-ups. No enquiry for the driver was made. I was not sorry when the moment came to say farewell to these wayfarers, and I believe I may remark, without indiscretion, that the group figures in Himself's play "Escape"—they are, of course, in the play, the picknickers on Dartmoor, on whom Matt Denant stumbles, relieving them of their ancient Ford car. The car is fictitious, and the little whooping cough girl has been eliminated, as unnecessary to the play.

Himself worked up enthusiasm for a miniature rifle range as an added small interest to village life. I was invited to open the range, and was much pleased that my two shots produced a handsome-looking target, brought to us by a very smiling secretary. So naïve was I that it was some time before it dawned on me that there are more ways than one of producing a good-looking target, and that it was most unlikely for me to have achieved any such result at an anxious moment. As we grow older we grow wiser and more cynical.

Occasionally, in stress of work, usually towards the end of a long novel, Himself had to insist on complete concentration and complete isolation. To me fell the not too pleasant task of speeding some guest who was by no means ready to be sped. One could not tell beforehand when these moments might occur; the crucial necessity for undisturbed work does not give notice of its approach. I remember one harrowing scene of departure, and I am quite sure that young relative looks on me to this day as the villain of the piece. Fortunately, the crucial "run-in" of a long piece of work did not happen very frequently; it might even come when we were without guests, though that was not often. In that case it only meant days of unusual silence, for which one well knew the reason and accustomed oneself without grudging.

There are wonderful times on the moor! The first sign of spring; that is, the young green of larches with their brilliant crimson-tipped branches; bluebell time, miles of them blossoming thick as grass, and above them crab-apples in flower, if Heaven permits it at the same moment—an exquisite harmony of colour; the first rush of the heather blooming; a fine-weather autumn day, still and blue, and tawny gold below. The only plain time, and it is very plain, is March, when all has been drenched, sodden, bleached, and trodden into straw-pale nothingness by the heavy foot of winter. Spring comes very late on the moor; one is glad indeed to see the larches and then the blackthorn.

Walks are innumerable; every tor is accessible; every



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stream navigable, one way or another; there is the wild open moor, there are deep wooded valleys. There is the British village of Grimspound with its circle of huts; there are monoliths, rocking-stones; there is Hayne Down, with its unexplained Bowerman's Nose—the oddest pile of rocks ever seen, rising like a gigantic scarecrow or watchman from the side of the hill; there is the smiling Lustleigh Cleave, where once I saw a splendid fox lying out on the top of a flat rock. I came quite near to him before he gracefully poured himself off the rock and was at once lost in the fern. Still nearer I have come to a lonely heron who was so absorbed in fishing in our tiny trout stream that we saw each other first when only about ten feet apart. I don't know which was the more petrified with astonishment, the awkward bird or I. What with the flighting cuckoos, circling buzzard hawks, wailing peewits, occasional curlews giving their liquid call (so different from their unhappy cry), the wild ponies busily cropping, but always with a wary eye against proximity—one need never be bored on the moor in fine weather.

It is curious to note how Dartmoor appeals, or fails to appeal, to different temperaments. In wartime we had the pleasure of playing host to a family of Belgian refugees—a well-known painter, his wife, and two young sons. The painter, once he had found his feet in a landscape so little like his own, and was able to emerge a little from the lassitude and utter misery of what he and his family had just gone through, found



subjects for his brush quite easily; perhaps the unfamiliar lines of the country acted as a stimulus. He certainly delved deep into the spirit of the moor in one or two of his canvases during that time. On the other hand, a relative of ours, also a talented painter, roamed and roved and hunted unhappily all over the moor without finding one subject to his liking. When I think of the lovely spots near us, such as Horsham Steps, Lustleigh village and Cleave, Hey Tor, Widecombe, Bell Tor, Hamildon, Lewsden and Holme Chase, Dartmeet, the Old Manaton road, sundry small clapper bridges, sundry small peaty sun-flecked streams, I can only feel that there were subjects to suit every painter's taste. But then I am no painter!

A vista, from the top of one of our most-loved hills, Hamildon, we did not greatly care for; from it one saw the grim prison of Dartmoor, about eleven miles away. There was no need of this bodily presence to remind Himself of his crusade for the abolition of solitary confinement; once he had set his hand to the plough he was not one to be strengthened or weakened by any outer manifestation; he never needed any spur.

He went over the prison twice, and came back on one occasion saying, with a wry smile, that he had never tasted such good bread in his life as that baked in the prison. But he never ceased observing, collecting, tabulating, testing, always so anxious that the truth and nothing but the truth should be the foundation of his work on this, as on every other matter of public interest that he took up. In Berlin, at the Moabit

prison, he interviewed a life-sentence prisoner. As he himself says: After twenty-eight years (at that time a life-sentence meant "for life" literally) it was no longer a man, but a grey-hued, almost disintegrating ghostly object that he looked on. The poor fellow, in his wild youth, had been caught by his employer making love to his (the employer's) wife. The youth had hit out wildly in defence, and the older man, falling backwards, had hit something hard with the back of his head and was dead at once. At some time during the long years in prison he had managed to paint a little picture; Himself said it had no relation to life, but had a kind of stylisé, Persian look, both strange and haunting.

I don't remember whether Himself was permitted to interview convicts in Dartmoor prison without the attendance of a warder, or one within earshot, but in several English prisons he did so interview sixty convicts at different times and places, and from what he observed, far more than from what they told him, he was strengthened in his conviction that solitary confinement was a most pernicious error.

Long before we were firmly rooted on the moor, we spent a good deal of time in other parts of Devon—Hartland and Clovelly, Porlock, Simonsbath, Lynton; and in the South Exmouth, Exeter, Torquay, and yet another spot with "family" roots—Wembury. From Exmouth we went to pay our respects to Sir Walter Raleigh at Hayes Barton. It was his early home, and is still an attractive old house with an ingle-nook—the

nook was piled up with splendid hydrangeas in bloom. Over the porch is the built-out room where the neighbours saw Sir Walter sitting, with smoke arising from his head; but this must have been after his visit to Virginia and discovery of the herb—tobacco.

After a long dreary winter South Cornwall also was a favourite haunt of ours; Lelant, St. Ives, Penzance, Cadgwith, that tiny village which fills the crack down to the sea from Ruan Minor, near the Lizard. From Mullion to Coverack and the Manacles we knew the coast and the inland country. Land's End, too, but not so well. Tintagel, Boscastle, Newquay, Trevone, Fowey, Bude, were familiar to us. But once settled on Dartmoor we did not often stray to Cornwall; it needed something like an S O S to take us there. And that we received more than once from our dear friend W. H. Hudson, ill and not very happily placed at Penzance or elsewhere. I remember that on one occasion of that kind I was unable to think of a way of getting spring flowers in late winter to him. It was before the development of the South-West as a safe "draw" for early flowers; and all I could find to take to him, as we made our way along a gorse-covered cliff, was a big branch of gorse with flowers newly opened. It was some labour to cut and carry it, but I had my reward; for when I laid it along his very austere mantelpiece he admitted that gorse—scent and flower—was his first favourite. I think it was that same day when he made one of his chastening remarks which are always so difficult to forget. I was complaining of my bad memory





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when he said rather testily: "You can always remember, if only you want to badly enough!" Although this may not always be quite correct, there is much more in it than one likes to admit to oneself.

Another bit of England in which we took very much pleasure in spring was Worcestershire and the adjacent bits of those other counties which come near Stratford and Broadway. At fruit-blossom time, on a fine spring evening, to drive from Broadway to Stratford through scented cherry-blossom, with nightingales singing to the moon, was a lovely experience, and the way home even more lovely, warmed by the remembrance of a well-acted play. On one day, accompanied by a play-minded friend, William Archer, we took both matinée and evening performances in our stride. On other occasions, not lured by plays, we hunted family roots in Worcestershire, and always found it an attractive bit of England, though perhaps not a show county like Devon.

Once the spirit moved us to take a look at English cathedrals, and putting Exeter, which we knew so well, behind us, we came to Wells. There, though it has nothing to do with cathedrals, we had the luck to see enacted the fairy tale of *The Princess disguised as a Swan*. What I take to be the Bishop's Palace is at right-angles to the cathedral, and along the moat which borders the palace came sailing a beautiful swan. Steering towards a long bell-pull which hung over the water at the side of the door, she tugged it hard; a bell rang, a little window opened suddenly, a cross old woman's head appeared decked with a mob cap in true witch

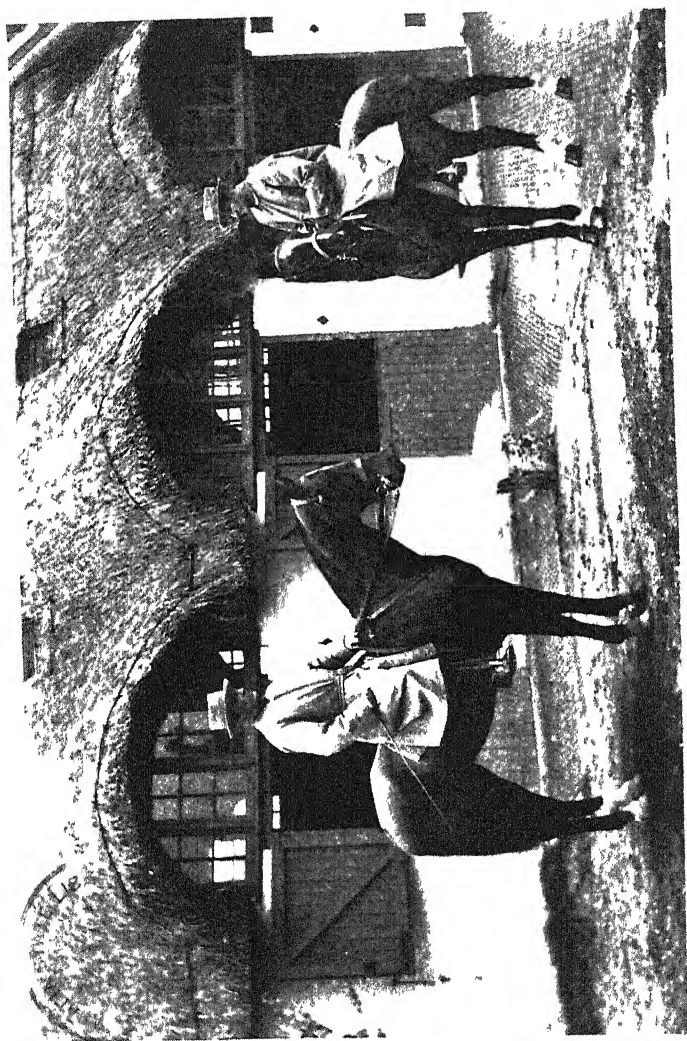
style; she flung out a plateful of scraps, banged the window angrily, and the poor Princess humbly tipped up behind and went fishing for her dinner in the dark water.

To return to cathedrals—our next was Salisbury, breathing peace and elegance—and Constable; Winchester, unmistakably splendid and authoritative, somehow; Peterborough, where I wanted the towers to rise a little higher; Selby Abbey, where we had a most pleasant experience. Leaving the car and walking towards the Abbey we encountered the Abbey organist, who had been playing to himself, had locked up and was going home. Seeing our disappointment, he very kindly turned back, reopened the church, and disappeared, saying that he was glad to play a little longer, and that we were to take our time looking round. We spent a perfect twenty minutes or so in a beautiful old church, with a fine sunset light warming the grey stone and fine music streaming from the organ-loft. I always hold in grateful memory the organist of Selby Abbey and herewith thank him. On to York, always very perfect; Durham, more perfect; then a turn homewards, via Lincoln in black and white elegance; Ely, quite individual; Norwich, even more dear to me than Salisbury, though so much smaller; St. Albans, and home. Durham and Winchester gave the most satisfaction, I think.

Another small jaunt, hardly to be called travel, was: Across to Cheltenham, and then north, through the western counties of England, to Shrewsbury and







THE STABLES AT BURY HOUSE

Chester; across the Pennines to Buxton and Rowsley, whence a little divergence to Doncaster for the Leger, and so—home.

In later days we were faithful attendants at Newmarket, for Himself never lost his interest in racing and horses; he declared that for him a young thoroughbred was the most beautiful thing in the world. From our Hampstead home Newmarket was but a two-hour run, and little or no London traffic to hamper one; only an unending string of Finchleys prevented one from going at a comfortable pace at first.

In 1923 we felt, with the utmost regret, that we must give up our little haven on Dartmoor. It was 1926 before we found another country home to please us, and that was at Bury, West Sussex. There were Downs, unfettered and almost unlimited, very close at hand, freedom for riding and walking. It had a kindly climate, too; magnolias, ceanothus, pomegranite, lemon verbena, arbutus, myrtle, many semi-hardy bushes and plants flourished happily enough. From the garden front the outlook was very serene and lovely, from the Amberley chalk pits on the left to Coombe woods hanging to the side of Bury Hill, and still further to the right more chalk pits and downs. There we lived for six years, in the intervals of our various travels, some of which I have already recounted at length. One whole winter visit to the States was still to come; that shorter visit to South America; one winter in South Africa; one in Majorca; several visits to Biarritz; two to Mont Dore in Auvergne, for the first of which, most

unusually, I started without Himself. He stayed in town for twenty-four hours in order to receive the decoration that gave us both very deep pleasure—the Order of Merit. There came also a visit to a castle near Bratislava, where, arriving in the wake of a violent thunderstorm, we found the electric light installation disabled, and our host and hostess with all their retainers ranged on a broad flight of steps at the entrance, lighted candles in hand, giving a most medieval effect to the arrival. Also, a visit to Prague, where we spent some happy and memorable hours with President Masaryk and Karel Capek. Also a visit to Ischl, where, in spite of bad weather, we had some beautiful walks and drives. Kind friends from Vienna, who had their car with them, did not rest until they had shown us most of the beauties of the Salzkammergut. Lake after lovely lake, pretty villages, mountains and occasional glaciers, deep sweet-scented woods, fresh smiling valleys revealed suddenly when some low pass or saddle had been topped; all was memorable, and calling for a much longer visit. We took our pleasure at Salzburg, too: “Everyman” was well produced and well acted; “Orfée” (Gluck’s) was quite dreadful, the delicate stuff of it almost entirely submerged in the riotous and greatly prolonged Hell scenes, played with immense gusto and coarseness—an unintelligent, unbalanced affair. A Mahler concert, again, was very fine; indeed nothing could have been more perfect. Back at Ischl, stress of weather at last drove us to Merano in search of warmth and sunshine; these we found to an almost

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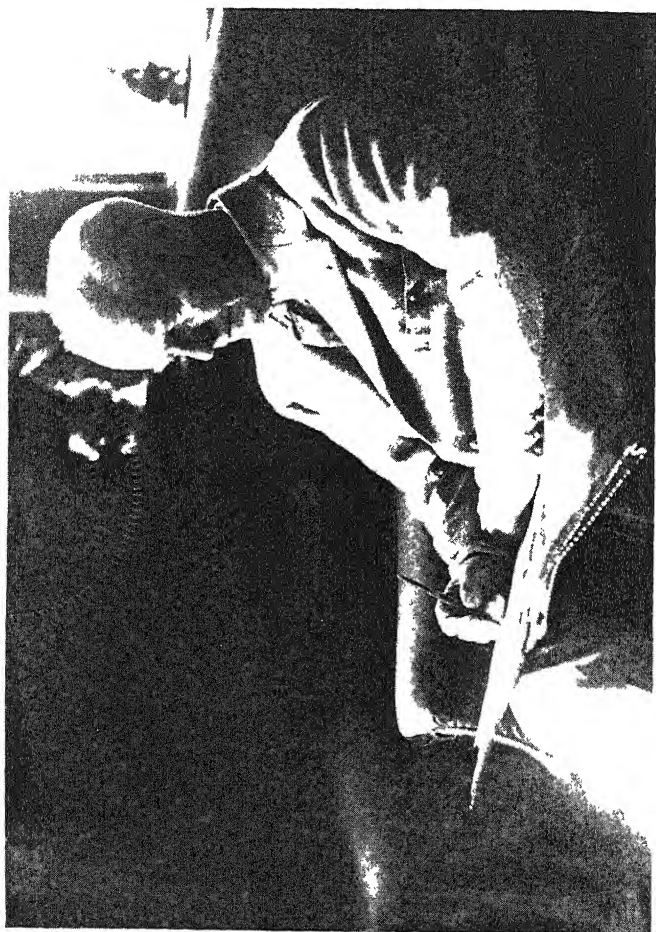
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THE INDESTRUCTIBLE BLOTTER

overpowering degree, for it was just vintage-time. Grapes everywhere, cut or still hanging in duskiness over one's head; fruit trees, burdened with apples and pears, propped lest they should split, so heavy-laden were they. Oddly among this idyllic atmosphere the long, four-day motor race from Milan north through mountain country, over passes, and round (always through fresh country) to Milan again, struck its modern note. Merano was a control station, and it was interesting to see the taming of these fiery speeders as they bumped through the stone-paved old town, threaded the narrow town gateway, and out into the blessed open again.

Still to come were visits to Munich, Budapest, Zurich. And in 1931 the P.E.N. Congress took place in Holland; we attended it with much pleasure. We were obliged to leave, however, in the midst of a festive evening on a Dutch liner in Rotterdam harbour, where we had gaily dined. motor to the Hook of Holland, cross during the night to Harwich, and present ourselves at 11.20 a.m. in Oxford for the ceremonies of the Encænïa, having motored from Liverpool Street direct.

So, we never grew indifferent to travel. And, wherever we journeyed, that simple "plant" of the writer's profession, the capacious, well-furnished, indestructible blotter, in friendly brown leather, went with us. I have it still, an eloquent symbol and constant reminder of the joy in Work that was always so happily possessed by its original owner.

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